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Kalātattvakośa

A LEXICON
OF FUNDAMENTAL CONCEPTS
OF THE INDIAN ARTS

VOL. IV
MANIFESTATION OF NATURE
SṚṢṬI VISTĀRA

INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS

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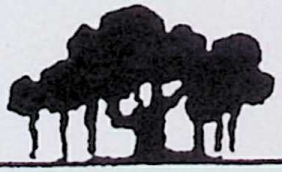
General Editor
Kapila Vatsyayan



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KALĀTATTVAKOŚA VOL.– IV

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MANIFESTATION OF NATURE
SṚṢṬI VISTĀRA

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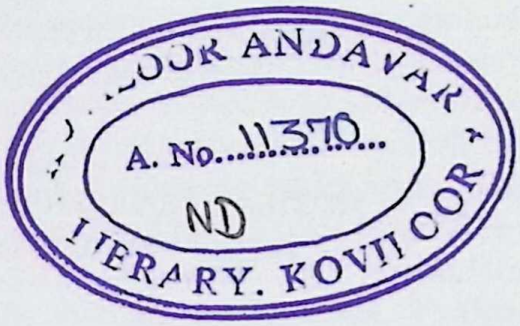
VOLUME IV



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&
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INDIRA GANDHI NATIONAL CENTRE FOR THE ARTS
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GENERAL EDITOR'S NOTE

Kalātattvakośa volume IV continues with the investigation of another group of key terms seminal to the Indian artistic traditions. As has been pointed out in my Forewords and General Editor's Notes of the respective volumes, this endeavour is an integral part of the IGNCA's commitment to explore the nature of the holistic system. The intellectual tools at our command are understandably limited on account of specialisation in particular disciplines. What was and is an asset and an indispensable pre-requisite for multidisciplinary work can and has become a difficulty. Insularity of disciplines from each other in recent scholarship has been recognised by most serious scholars, many attempts have been made to cross boundaries. In the Indian context, the specific disciplines evolved from a unified vision and manifested themselves in a multiplicity which was contained within the periphery of a circle. The disciplines and specific concerns were thus segments of a circle, emerging from a centre and bonded by a circumference. What is true of the emergence of specific disciplines: Āyurveda, Vyākaraṇa, Jyotiṣa, Gaṇita, Darśana, Itihāsa, Purāṇa, Vāstu, Śilpa, Saṅgīta and Nāṭya, is also true of the key concepts and terms selected for the **Kalātattvakośa** project.

The concepts and keywords included in the earlier volumes (Kalātattvakośa volumes I, II, III) clearly demonstrated the pervasiveness of the term, as also its capacity to acquire a distinctive specificity conditioned by the context of the particular discipline. Thus three movements are clearly discernible. The first is the glacial level of thought, this is initially articulated in the Vedas and elucidated in the Upaniṣads. At this level, the concepts and the terms, constitute the basis for developing a system of interpenetration as also establishing correspondences at the micro and macro level. The conjointedness of *śarīra* and *ātmā*, *brahman* and *ātman, jīvātmā* and *paramātmā* and interpretation of *bīja* and *bindu, ap* and *agni* bears this out. The second movement is the development of the concept within the larger ambience of the specific discipline, e.g. Vyākaraṇa (grammar), Āyurveda (medicine), Jyotiṣa, Gaṇita (Astronomy, Mathematics), Darśana (philosophic schools) and the Vāstu, Śilpa, Nāṭya (architecture, sculpture, dramaturgy). Besides etymology, there is an organic growth of the concept within the discipline. This is evident from a perusal of the journey of terms, such as *prakṛti, ākāśa, vāyu, agni, jyotis, prakāśa, ap, pṛthivī*, included in volume III of the **Kalātattvakośa**. Here the movement is from the centre to the circumference but within the boundaries of its own segment. The third movement builds upon the first two particularly the establishment of correspondence, and that of taking cognisance of the levels of perception explored in the specific disciplines. The methodologies of the third movement are diverse. Some times

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a multilayered system is evolved, at other times 'codes' are established through a language of myth as in the Purāṇas. Plurality and flexibility of approaches characterises the third movement. Reversibility and transmutation are always possible.

Consequently no categories can be considered frozen or static. While a rough chronological graph can be drawn up, this can be misleading because like time itself, the terms make loops in meaning and are not restricted to a linear movement in an un-dimensional plane. An outstanding instance are the terms like *prakṛti, bīja, bindu.* Understandably in the absence of a comprehension of the system of a centre, circle, circumference, segments, and multi-dimensionality and frequent overlaying, there has been comment on the fuzzy ambiguity of the layers of meaning of the terms. The basic difference between this system and the others (we may even call them knowledge systems) is the recognition of fluidity and flux in one and fixed entities in the other.

These general remarks could only be made after a close investigation of the usage of the terms in a large corpus of primary source material in many domains, and a close perusal of the texts so far published in the twin project of the **Kalāmūlaśāstra** series of the IGNCA. There is now a basis for identifying (if not yet deducting all the principles) the contours of the Indian system.

The terms included in this volume are incontrovertible proof. The comprehensive term *indriya* includes sense organs, sense perceptions (motor sensory). It can be further broken up into smaller constituents. Six, eleven, twenty-two and more. Each corresponds to the primal elements, and has an inner and outer dimension. Other correspondences are established with the forms of nature and the mythic world of deities. The history of the development of the terms takes different shapes and contours in the Buddhist, Jaina streams, as also the diverse disciplines. The term is crucial for an understanding of the body, mind, self (soul) relationship. A mighty edifice of embodiment is created in the arts. The sensuous and the spiritual move in tandem. Multilayering and the interpenetration of the levels of the physical and non-physical (even metaphysical), the imperceptible and perceptible, the implicit and the explicit are guiding principles.

The terms *dravya* and *dhātu* strongly reinforce the view that the material and non-material are only two dimensions of a single entity. From their primary meanings to their etymologies and further growth and application in diverse contexts and disciplines it is clear that the terms are like seeds. Each seed gives rise to a particular tree with a trunk, branches, leaves and flowers, each part distinctive but dependent for its life source on the latent potentialities of the seed. And yet they are interrelated as different trees of similar species.

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The term *guṇa* along with its twin *doṣa* is an instance of entwining or symbiosis which takes place at the very moment of initiation. The single strands of a rope entwined, they can be measured (counting in arithmetic) and yet are hard to separate one from the other. Extended to the sphere of mental constricts and states of consciousness, logically the term denotes attributes and qualities, which are ever present and equally inextricably interwined. The categories of *tamas, rajas, sattva* are neither insulated nor fixed. The inert can be ignited to activity and can reach evanescence. Contrarily the refined evanescent can become tangible and powerful and descend to dark inertness. A correspondence is established with the *indriya* sense perceptions and the *dravya* and *dhātu* and the primal elements (*mahābhūtas*). More, each singly and together can be gross or subtle. Alongside is the twin category of *doṣa* also not insular or in direct opposition. There is immense possibility of *guṇa* becoming *doṣa* and *vice versa.* The dynamics of reversibility of related categories is unambiguous.

It will be obvious from the above that none of these terms denote tangible, graspable materiality and physicality despite their being grounded in the latter. Also they are not just entities, they become indicators of processes and eventually systems of thought.

Common to these terms, as also the terms included in the previous volumes, are the key terms often in triads, which denote dimensions, levels and processes. The cluster of *ādhibhautika, ādhidaivika* and the *ādhyātmika* allude both in spatial and temporal terms to the primal elemental materiality, non-materiality and the inner core self. The unsaid implicit relates to not only an object but to the subject. Not only the perceived but the perceiver. Again they are inter penetrative like the *guṇas*. In turn the triad of the *guṇas* interacts with that of the *ādhibhautika, ādhidaivaka* and *ādhyātmika.* A distant correspondence can also be established between *tāmasika* and *ādhibhautika*, the *rājasika* and *ādhidaivika*, and *sāttvika* and *ādhyātmika.*

The next triad of the *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *para* allows for the cognisance of levels of both the signified and the signifier. Grossness and subtlety is intrinsic to the material and the non-material. Object-subject, perception and idea-alike. The cluster also suggests movement and process in an ascending or descending order. The recognition of the *para* transcendental does not exclude the material and tangible. These are levels with a constant movement from one to the other. Thus there is a *sthūla* (gross) and *sūkṣma* (subtle) *śarīra* (body). Again an edifice of gigantic structure of embodiment and disembodiment is created through the inter-connected terms. As elsewhere, the cluster is related to the preceding two.

All these together culminate conceptually to the most fundamental triad of *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *pralaya* or *saṃhāra.* Now the process and movement is given a

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central place. The essence is in the kinetics of origin, evolution and dissolution in an unending movement. The beginning is the end, the end is the beginning. Indian myth and art is the unequivocal articulation of the conception, of continuous movement, of change and of 'form' in an unceasing cycle. The countless myths and the consequent typologies of iconographical forms communicate through a visual, aural and kinetic design this dynamics. If the Naṭarāja encapsulates the myth, by collapsing the myth into an icon, the Durgā pūjā the Mudiyeṭṭu convey the same through 'performance' in defined time. The making and unmaking of the Kālacakra *maṇḍala* in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition is analogous. Indeed the methodologies of evolving a ritualistic and/or artistic design to re-enact and re-create this movement of involution, evolution and dissolution are multiple. It ranges from the making and ultimate annihilation of the *śālā* (enclosure) in the Vedic *yajña* or the immersion of the very image made, adored and worshipped or the desecration of the visual design (Mudiyeṭṭu, Kālacakra) or symbolising it as through the iconographic form of the Naṭarāja. The terms permeate poetry of most Indian languages from the earliest to the latest. Two examples one from the prologue of **Abhijñāna Śākuntala** by Kālidāsa and the other from **The Compositions of Muddusvami Dikshitar** (pp. 414–415) in the 18th century will suffice.

Kālidāsa says:

> Water, the creator's primordial element,
> the fire-bearing sacrifice, the priest,
> the time-dividing sun and moon,
> ether filling the universe with sound,
> what men call nature, the origin of all seeds,
> air that living creatures breather –
> may Śiva bless you with his eight manifest forms!

and centuries later Sri Muddusvami Dikshitar sings:

> He is Bhairava, the sky of consciousness.
> He is the enemy of the demon Pura, bearing the
> Brahma Kapāla and trident.
>
> He is the cosmic dancer Lord of Citsabha;
> holding a deer in his hand which was created by
> the sages of Dārukāvana.
>
> I always seek refuge in Śaṅkarābharaṇa; the
> Lord bedecked with ornaments of rubies which
> bestow auspiciousness, who is the foremost in
> bestowing the desired boons on his devotees.

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His lotus feet bestow salvation and also the four human
values – Puruṣārthas like Dharma, Artha, etc.
He sports with the noble Rāga Devakriyā and
also performs sportively the five acts namely
Sṛṣṭi – creation, Sthiti – sustenance, Vilaya – destruction,
Tirodhāna – concealment and Anugraha – blessing.

Naturally it was difficult to find a suitable title to encompass all the terms included in the volume. Although the volume was in continuation of volume III entitled **Mahābhūta** these were not the *bhūtas* (the primal elements) although undoubtedly the manifestation of the *bhūtas* at one level. My colleagues and I, specially Dr. R.C. Sharma, the dedicated Honorary Coordinator in Varanasi and his team, Shri M.C. Joshi, Pandit Satkari Mukhopadhyaya and Dr. Advaitavadini Kaul reflected upon possible titles. *Sṛṣṭi Prapañca* appeared most appropriate after a number of options were considered. However this was rejected on account of the recent vulgate nuances of the term *prapañca* in popular usage. As the volume contains the terms which speak of both becoming and being, the material and the non-material, entity, substance and process, the title *Sṛṣṭi Vistāra* was chosen. Hopefully it will serve as an indicator for the macroscopic universe of the concepts and the terms.

This undertaking like others, as pointed out before has been difficult. The problems were intrinsic and extrinsic. The complexity of the enterprise increases with each volume. Mobilisation of expertise of vertical depth in particular disciplines and texts as also with an equal ability to meaningfully transgress boundaries of discipline and intellectual conditioning is not easy. The logistic coordination and continual interaction between the group of young scholars dedicated only to **Kalātattvakośa** and the assistant editors and researchers required perseverance, tenacity and flexibility. The distinguished contributors of the articles depended in part or whole on the initial cards made. Some found them satisfactory others not. Editorial modifications and amendments were necessary; some re-writing was inescapable. Preparing camera-ready-copy of bilingual texts is always challenging. Added to all this was my wish and anxiety to train a younger generation of editors who would carry on the work in the future. I am happy that the task has been accomplished. For this I would like to thank my colleagues, Shri M.C. Joshi, Dr. R.C. Sharma and Pandit Satkari Mukhopadhyaya. I would like to acknowledge the IGNCA's and my personal debt to our contributors, who have guided and supported the project far beyond writing an essay particularly Dr. Prem Lata Sharma who has been a pillar of strength. Others – Prof. V.N. Misra, Dr. P.K. Agrawala, Late Dr. R.S. Bhattacharya and Pandit H.N. Chakravarty have responded positively to our queries and have given very valuable suggestions. Of course we miss Dr. Bettina Bäumer the editor of the

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previous volumes. Finally it remains for me to thank the two young editors Dr. Advaitavadini Kaul and Dr. Sukumar Chattopadhyay as also the band of researchers in Varanasi and Delhi. Dr. Advaitavadini Kaul and Dr. Sukumar Chattopadhyay have mentioned them all by name in their introduction. I wish them all many decades of fruitful exploration of a universe of ideas, which reveal a cosmic vision valid for all times.

October, 1998

Kapila Vatsyayan

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INTRODUCTION

त्रयी सांख्यं योगः पशुपतिमतं वैष्णवमिति
प्रभिन्ने प्रस्थाने परमिदमदः पथ्यमिति च ।
रुचीनां वैचित्र्यादृजुकुटिलनानापथजुषां
नृणामेको गम्यस्त्वमसि पयसामर्णव इव ॥

Śivamahimna Stotram 7

The three Vedas, Sāṃkhya and Yoga śāstra, the doctrine of Paśupati (Śiva) and Vaisnavism and so on – These are the different paths; some think this one is the better and for some another is agreeable (suitable). According to one's liking (devotion or the elevation of mind) all men follow their particular paths – direct or indirect. But You are the only destination – as the ocean is the goal of all the flowing waters of the rivers.

I. General Background

Indian tradition both in theory (*śāstra*) and practice (*prayoga*) evolves from the vision of 'Absolute Reality' that governs the whole universe and at all levels and states of existence. The Vedas are revelations from a heightened state of consciousness. Upaniṣads, Brāhmaṇas and Purāṇas unravel the mysteries of the phenomena at various levels of perception. Various systems of thought, including the Buddhist and Jaina emerge. So do the disciplines – Āyurveda, Astronomy, metaphysics, philosophy and the arts. Fundamental conceptions of the cosmos, space, time, body, mind, and self pervade almost all theories and disciplines making each of them interrelated and interdependent just like a *sūtra* (thread) that holds (invisibly) all beads together.

In this framework the wide range of Indian art-forms can never be understood in isolation. For a fuller comprehension of the system of interrelatedness and interpenetration IGNCA identified approximately 250 important terms representing fundamental concepts occurring in various schools and disciplines. This was done after considerable research and deliberations with the scholars. By selecting the groups of terms under particular categories and thereby concentrating upon each category in each volume of the **Kalātattvakośa** while focussing upon their occurrence and significance in the arts, has endeavoured to evolve as an important modern device to grasp the essential thought and knowledge system of the Indian tradition.

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The criteria of selecting the terms and their grouping in the previous three volumes has been elaborately discussed by the editor of those volumes Dr. Bettina Bäumer. The main purpose of the **Kalātattvakośa** is to concentrate on textual traditions principally drawn from Sanskrit and Pali sources. An indepth investigation into the primary sources will and has hopefully already facilitated the reader to learn about the interlocking of different disciplines. The groupings in the first three volumes relate to:

a. pervasive and perennial terms (*vyāpaka*);

b. terms relating to notions of space and time (*deśa* and *kāla*);

c. the primal elements (*mahābhūtas*).

The present volume deals with another cluster – grouped together as *Sṛṣṭi Vistāra*. Volume V will be devoted to **Shape and Form** – *Ākṛti*. Subsequently another subsidiary series on the subsidiary technical terms specific to the arts is envisaged.

II. Method and Use

The system followed here in the method and use corresponds almost completely with that introduced in the previous volumes. The same is given as under:

1. The list of terms has been organised thematically by concepts. Groups of related terms are assembled in each volume, and the logic of their arrangement is explained in the introduction. Alphabetical reference is facilitated by the **List of Terms** which gives the complete list of entries for the whole series, mentioning the volume in which an article has already appeared. The **Index** directs the reader to the occurrence of the terms throughout, and also refers him to other significant terms in Sanskrit and English. **Arrow** → refers to an entry, in the same or another volume, where the term in question is treated more extensively.

2. Within a desirable flexibility of structure, the content of an entry generally follows this sequence as under:

Overview
Etymology and Related Terms
Layers of Meaning
Development of the Concept

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Manifestation in the Arts
Classification
Process
Conclusion

Quick identification of a section which may interest the reader specifically is thus facilitated.

In some cases where a concept has a distinct meaning in different fields, an article has been divided into two or three parts assigned to different authors.

3. All Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit quotations are given in Devanāgarī with a full English translation; Sanskrit words or phrases occurring in the running text are transliterated and accompanied by a translation at least once. This is designed to provide access for those having limited knowledge of Sanskrit, and for non-readers of the Devanāgarī script.

4. Text references are abbreviated; full titles appear only in the running text of the entry (in bold face). The **List of Abbreviations** provides the full titles, and the **General Bibliography** notes the text editions and translations used.

5. A **Select Bibliography** is appended to each article; this contains references to secondary literature to which the author refers. These references are not exhaustive but are relevant to tracing further information about the concept.

6. The etymologies, whether traditional or based on modern linguistics, represent the opinion of the author; they have sometimes been edited, and in cases of doubt or difference of opinion the reader is referred to Manfred Mayrhofer, *Etymologisches Worterbuch des Altindoarishchen*, Heidelberg (Carl Winter) 1986ff.

7. All translations are acknowledged, whether published (see **Bibliography**) or unpublished. If a translator's name is not given, the text has been translated by the author. Where the author has amended a previous translation, this is indicated.

8. The series is illustrated with a minimum number of essential line-drawings of fundamental diagrams, *yantras*. Full photographic illustration of art-historical developments and variations falls outside the purview of these volumes.

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III. Manifestation of Nature

The cosmic principle which hides reality from the vision of man is beginningless. Creation being an inherent nature of 'Absolute Reality' is unfolding of different orders from the original *prakṛti*. The beginning and end are determined alike for each and every creation, but it is the essence that remains unaffected in all states and conditions just like a lump of gold despite the varieties of ornaments created out of it.

Analogous to the process of cosmic evolution, art has to be understood as a new creation since it forms an aspect of the large traditional worldview. In the whole process there are thought and concepts, the traditional classification of types and the visualisation of certain mental states. These require to be understood in relation to their interconnectedness and place in the totality of meaning. Only then is it possible to comprehend viewing arts in the real sense.

The perennial concepts like *brahman, puruṣa, ātman, śarīra, prāṇa, bīja, lakṣaṇa* and *śilpa* pervade almost all schools of Indian thought and disciplines. Thus the **Kalātattvakośa** volume I starts with these very concepts. The volume II contains the concepts of **Time and Space** and the volume III is devoted to **Mahābhūtas** (primal elements) and the related terms. The present volume is complimentary and in continuation of the volume III as the concepts discussed here represent a group of terms which have their correspondences with *bhūtas* – the elements in the manifestation of cosmos.

Among the concepts selected for this volume, viz. *indriya, dravya, dhātu* and *guṇa-doṣa* are also closely related to each other. Although all these terms convey different meanings during the course of their development, basic to them all is the concept that each is a constituent of creation. Further their interrelationship also needs to be understood as connected with 'Ultimate Reality'.

Indriya is a fundamental concept that has a central place in the entire Indian tradition and in the arts. It implies within itself the meaning of grasping the sensible (*bhūta-mātrā*) as well as the intelligible (*prajñā-mātrā*) elements of appearance. The flux of reality lies in the underlying unity of both. For this reason, despite the five senses (*śabda*: sound, *sparśa*: touch, *rūpa*: form, *rasa*: taste, and *gandha*: smell) and their corresponding sense organs (*śrotra*: ear, *tvak*: skin, *cakṣus*: eye; *jihvā*: tongue and *nāsikā*: nose) that perceive the five elements (*ākāśa*: ether, *vāyu*: air, *tejas*: fire, *ap*: water and *pṛthivī*: earth) respectively, the Upaniṣads as also the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** specially lay emphasis only upon the eye and the ear as the primary sense organs because the eye symbolises the sense (outer) perception and the ear intellectual (inner) perception. The position of *indriyas* is compared with that of the gates, means or instruments (*karaṇas*).

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Because the final deliverence depends upon the *indriyas* – the sense-organs and motor-organs. When all the faculties of sense-organs come to repose alongwith mind and the intellect does not waver, that is the highest goal of life. Thus *indriyas* as *karaṇas* (instruments or means) turn to be divine powers (*devīs*) receiving the appellation of *karaṇeśvarīs*. The idea pervades the whole Indian tradition.

The perceptions both sensible as well as intelligible are but the appearances of the Ultimate Reality. It is the essence (ultimate *dravya*) of that reality that is manifested as substances (*dravya* as objects) in various forms and shapes. The essence of any substance conceived in word or form, if approached rightly by both – the seer and the seen, is manifested more clearly in the inner self than in the outer world. The term *dravya* denoting the meaning of physical perceptions as well as absolute conception conveys the idea of that which underlies the unity of essence (non-material) and the substance (material). The term *dhātu* (substance) although conveying almost the same meaning as that of *dravya* (substance) has developed as an important concept particularly in Buddhist thought. Here it conveys the idea of support that represents the all pervading basic element. Hence *dhātu* has been presented as a separate term here.

There is no substance that exists without *guṇas* (qualities). *Guṇas* have been classified in various categories in different disciplines. It is the relative strength of *guṇas* that determines the mental character of an individual. In the arts whatever subserves the aesthetic end in view is a *guṇa* otherwise it is a *doṣa*. *Doṣa* is not to be understood in the sense of negation but as an obstruction or the like. For *guṇas* and *doṣas* are relative in character. *Doṣa* as a relative concept and also as receiving special treatment in Āyurveda has been presented as an appendix to the article on *guṇa*.

The vision and understanding of outer and inner as reflected throughout the *śāstra* (theory) and *prayoga* (practice) is deeply rooted in the Indian tradition. This has given rise to certain concepts denoting the levels of perception, i.e. outer, inner and the underlying unity that remains beyond the purview of the two levels. The triad of the terms *adhibhūta, adhidaiva, adhyātma* and *sthūla, sūkṣma, para* come under this category of concepts. The first triad has also developed as single concepts or in pairs. In all respects they reveal the relationship with the absolute reality both individually as well as collectively. For instance the concept *adhibhūta* perceived as *virāṭ puruṣa* represents an aggregate of all elemental bodies; *adhidaiva* developes relationship between the divine powers and Supreme Divinity and *adhyātma* between individual *ātman* and *paramātman*. Collectively the concept relates to the physical, psychological and the metaphysical aspects of the only reality that is absolute in every

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respect.

The interrelated terms *sthūla*, *sūkṣma*, *para* represent the concept of reality at the gross, subtle and transcendent levels. The elements in their gross form give rise to the objects of various forms and shapes, but in the subtle form they are known as *tanmātra* (thatness) or the atoms of respective elements. The *para* (transcendent) also meaning *pūrṇa* (complete) always replenishing the visual and the tangible yet remains beyond the grasp of senses or intelligence. The concept is well defined in the rituals. Worship of idol can be gross or practical (*sthūla*) and subtle or mental (*sūkṣma*). Indian art acquires symbolic significance on account of the interplay of the gross and the subtle, the *sthūla* and the *sūkṣma*. A constant process of refinement is alluded to. This allows for the transubstantiation of matter into energy and *vice-versa*. Closely related are the concepts of the *avyakta* (unmanifested) and *vyakta* (manifested).

The manifestation of nature is a continuous process with its three aspects of *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *saṃhāra*, i.e. creation, maintenance and dissolution. It is a cycle that has a starting point followed by the sustenance in time and space and it has to end to start a new. The concept permeates the traditional world-view. Each of these terms and the cluster of the three triads are seminal to the Indian artistic tradition. They govern the formal language of the arts. Polyvalence of meaning penetrates into significant form. The basic *raison d'état* for 'stasis' and 'flux' as an essential is provided. Artistic expression is then not a frozen entity, it is both symbol of and stimulus for a continuous process of ceaseless movement and stillness.

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Advaitavadini Kaul

Sukumar Chattopadhyay

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ABBREVIATIONS

General principles in forming abbreviations, concerning the last part of the title:

Ā	Āgama
Ār	Āraṇyaka
Bh	Bhāṣya
Br	Brāhmaṇa
Ca	Carita
Dh	Dharma (e.g. DhŚ Dharmaśāstra)
G	Gītā
H	Hṛdaya
Kā	Kārikā
Ko	Kośa
L	Lakṣaṇa
Nik	Nikāya
P	Paddhati
Prad	Pradīpikā
Prak	Prakāśa
Prāt	Prātiśākhya
Pur	Purāṇa
R	Ratnākara
Sam	Saṃhitā
Samu	Samuccaya
Saṅg	Saṅgraha
Sā	Sāra
Ś	Śāstra
Sm	Smṛti
Sū	Sūtra
T	Tantra
Ṭi	Ṭīkā
Up	Upaniṣad
Vā	Vārttika
V	Veda
Vim	Vimarśinī
Vi	Vivaraṇa
Vṛ	Vṛtti
Y	Yāmala

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Sections of Agamic Texts:

cp	caryāpāda
kp	kriyāpāda
vp	vidyāpāda
yp	yogapāda

Sections of Ayurvedic Texts:

CiSthā	Cikitsā Sthāna
ISthā	Indriya Sthāna
KaSthā	Kalpa Sthāna
NiSthā	Nidāna Sthāna
ŚāSthā	Śārīra Sthāna
SiSthā	Siddhi Sthāna
SūSthā	Sūtra Sthāna
ViSthā	Vimāna Sthāna

Major Texts

AbhidhKo	Abhidharma Kośa
AbhidhSamu	Abhidharma Samuccaya
AbhŚāk	Abhijñānaśākuntala
Abhil	Abhilaṣitārtha-Cintāmaṇi (also Mānasollāsa of Someśvara)
AbhiBhā	Abhinava Bhāratī
AbhDar	Abhinaya Darpaṇa
Abhis	Abhisamayālaṅkāra
AbhNāṭ	Abhiṣeka Nāṭaka
AghŚP	Aghoraśivācārya Paddhati
AgPur	Agni Purāṇa
AhSam	Ahirbudhnya Saṃhitā
AitĀr	Aitareya Āraṇyaka
AitBr	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa
AitUp	Aitareya Upaniṣad
AjKo	Ajaya Kośa
AjitĀ	Ajitāgama
ĀlP	Ālāpa Paddhati
AmKo	Amara Kośa
AneSaṅg	Anekārtha Saṅgraha
AṅgNik	Aṅguttara Nikāya
AparPṛ	Aparājitā Pṛcchā
ĀpDhSū	Āpastamba Dharma-Sūtra

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ĀpGṛhSū	Āpastamba Gṛhya-Sūtra
ĀpŚrSū	Āpastamba Śrauta-Sūtra
ĀpŚulSū	Āpastamba Śulba-Sūtra
ArthŚ	Artha-Śāstra
Ārya	Āryabhaṭīya
ĀryaMS	Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṅgīti (with Amṛtakaṇikānāma... comm.)
ĀśCū	Āścaryacūḍāmaṇi (Śaktibhadra)
AṣṭH	Aṣṭāṅga-Hṛdaya (Vāgbhaṭa-I)
AṣṭSaṅg	Aṣṭāṅga-Saṅgraha (Vāgbhaṭa-II)
AṣṭPrPār	Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā Pāramitā
ĀśvaGṛhSū	Āśvalāyana Gṛhya-Sūtra
ĀśvaŚrSū	Āśvalāyana Śrauta-Sūtra
AV	Atharvaveda (Śaunaka)
AVPari	Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa
Aṭṭh	Aṭṭhasālinī (on Dhammasaṅgaṇi)
Aucitya	Aucityavicāracarcā (Kṣemendra)
Avim	Avimāraka
BālCa	Bālacarita
BDhSū	Baudhāyana Dharma-Sūtra
BGṛhSū	Baudhāyana Gṛhya-Sūtra
BŚrSū	Baudhāyana Śrauta-Sūtra
BŚulSū	Baudhāyana Śulba-Sūtra
BhG	Bhagavad-Gītā
BhGŚBh	Bhagavad-Gītā Śaṅkara Bhāṣya
BhāgPur	Bhāgavata Purāṇa
BhSi	Bhaktirasāmṛtasindhu (Rūpa Gosvāmin)
BhRas	Bhaktirasāyana (Madhusūdana Sarasvatī)
BhārGṛhSū	Bhāradvāja Gṛhya-Sūtra
BhārŚrSū	Bhāradvāja Śrauta-Sūtra
BhaBh	Bharata Bhāṣya (Nānyadeva)
BhāPari	Bhāṣāpariccheda
BhPrak	Bhāva Prakāśana (Śāradātanaya)
BhṛSam	Bhṛgu Saṃhitā
BoBhū	Bodhisattvabhūmi
BoCar	Bodhicaryāvatāra
BrPur	Brahma Purāṇa
BraPur	Brahmāṇḍa Purāṇa
BrSū	Brahma-Sūtra
BrSūŚBh	Brahma-Sūtra Śaṅkara Bhāṣya
BṛUp	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad

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BṛD	Bṛhaddeśī (Mataṅga)
BṛDev	Bṛhaddevatā (Śaunaka)
BṛJā	Bṛhat Jātaka
BṛSam	Bṛhat Saṃhitā (Varāhamihira)
BudCa	Buddhacarita
CāVyā	Cāndra Vyākaraṇa
CarSam	Caraka Saṃhitā
Cāru	Cārudatta
ChaSū	Chandaḥ-Sūtra
ChUp	Chāndogya Upaniṣad
Chan	Chandomañjarī
CiL	Citra-Lakṣaṇa
DBhūSū	Daśabhūmika-Sūtra
DUVṛ	Daśapādī Uṇādi Vṛtti
DaRū	Daśarūpaka
Datti	Dattilam (Dattila)
DBhāgPur	Devī Bhāgavata Purāṇa
DPur	Devī Purāṇa
DhPad	Dhammapada
DhSaṅ	Dhammasaṅgaṇi
Dhav	Dhavalā (comm. on ṢaṭĀ) (Vīrasenācārya)
DhvĀl	Dhvanyāloka
DhvĀlLoc	Dhvanyāloka-Locana (Abhinavagupta)
DīghNik	Dīgha Nikāya
Divyāv	Divyāvadāna
DSaṅg	Dravyasaṅgraha (Nemicandra)
DSaṅgVṛ	Dravyasaṅgraha Vṛtti (Brahma Deva)
DuSapta	Durgā Saptaśatī
Dūta	Dūtaghaṭotkaca
GāSa	Gāhā Sattasai (Gāthā Saptaśatī)
Gaṇar	Gaṇaratnamahodadhi
GarPur	Garuḍa Purāṇa
GauDhSū	Gautama Dharma-Sūtra
GomJīv	Gommaṭasāra Jīvakāṇḍa (Nemicandra)
GoBr	Gopatha Brāhmaṇa
GuhyaT	Guhyasamāja Tantra (with Guhyasamāja-Pradīpa ... comm.)
HaiKo	Haima Kośa
HBVil	Haribhaktivilāsa
HarPur	Harivaṃśa Purāṇa
HaCa	Harṣacarita

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HyPrad	Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā
HayaPāñc	Hayaśīrṣa Pāñcarātra
HT	Hevajra Tantra
Hit	Hitopadeśa
ĪśGP	Īśānaśivagurudeva Paddhati
ĪśUp	Īśa Upaniṣad
ĪPraKā	Īśvara Pratyabhijñā-Kārikā (Utpaladeva)
ĪPraVim	Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vimarśinī
ĪPraVivVim	Īśvara Pratyabhijñā Vivṛti Vimarśinī
ĪśSam	Īśvara Saṃhitā
JaimUpBr	Jaiminīya Upaniṣad Brāhmaṇa
Jā	Jātaka
Jāmā	Jātakamālā
JāUp	Jāvālopaniṣad
JaySam	Jayākhya Saṃhitā
JinSam	Jina Saṃhitā
JīvPradṬī	Jīvatattvapradīpikā Ṭīkā (on GomJīv)
Jñān	Jñānārṇava (Śubhacandra)
Kād	Kādambarī
KāCaT	Kālacakra Tantra
KāPur	Kālikā Purāṇa
KāmKVil	Kāma-Kalā-Vilāsa
KāmSū	Kāma-Sūtra
KāmĀ	Kāmikāgama
KāśSam	Kāśyapa Saṃhitā
KāśŚi	Kāśyapa Śilpa
KāṭhSam	Kāṭhaka Saṃhitā
KaṭhUp	Kaṭha Upaniṣad
KāVṛ	Kāśikā Vṛtti
KāVyā	Kātantra Vyākaraṇa
KātBhāSū	Kātyāyana Bhāṣika-Sūtra
KātŚrSū	Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra
KātŚrSūBh	Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra Bhāṣya (Karka Bhāṣya)
KātŚulSū	Kātyāyana Śulba-Sūtra
KauṣUp	Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad
Kāvyād	Kāvyādarśa
Kāvyāl	Kāvyālaṅkāra (Bhāmaha)
KāvyālSū	Kāvyālaṅkāra-Sūtra (Vāmana)
KāMīm	Kāvya-Mīmāṃsā
KāPrak	Kāvya Prakāśa
KeUp	Kena Upaniṣad

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KhudNik	Khuddaka Nikāya
Kir	Kirātārjunīyam
Kod	Kodaṇḍamaṇḍana
KulT	Kulārṇava Tantra
Kum	Kumārasambhava
KūrPur	Kūrma Purāṇa
LYVās	Laghu Yoga-Vāsiṣṭha (Abhinanda)
LT	Lakṣmī Tantra
Lalitā	Lalitā-Sahasranāma (with Bhāṣya)
LVi	Lalitavistara
LaSū	Laṅkāvatāra-Sūtra
Līlā	Līlāvatī (Bhāskarācārya)
MāDhā	Mādhavīyā Dhātuvṛtti
MBh	Mahābhārata
Mahābh	Mahābhāṣya
MNUp	Mahānārāyaṇa Upaniṣad
MNPrak	Mahānaya Prakāśa
MNT	Mahānirvāṇa Tantra
MPur	Mahā Purāṇa
MaMa	Mahārtha Mañjarī
MSSaṅg	Mahāsubhāṣita Saṅgraha (Ed. L. Sternbach)
MVas	Mahāvastu
MaCa	Mahāvīracarita
Mahāv	Mahāvyutpatti
MSūAl	Mahāyāna Sūtrālaṅkāra
MaViṃ	Mahāyānaviṃśaka
MaitSam	Maitrāyaṇī Saṃhitā
MaitUp	Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad
MajNik	Majjhima Nikāya
MālMā	Mālatīmādhava
Māla	Mālavikāgnimitra
MVT	Mālinīvijayottara Tantra
MāMey	Mānameyodaya
MāSā	Mānasāra
MānŚrSū	Mānava Śrauta-Sūtra
MānŚulSū	Mānava Śulba-Sūtra
MāṇḍKā	Māṇḍūkya-Kārikā
MāṇḍUp	Māṇḍūkya Upaniṣad
MMK	Mañjuśrīmūlakalpa
Manu	Manu Smṛti
MarSam	Marīci Saṃhitā (Vaikhānasa Āgama)

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MārkPur	Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa
MPĀ	Mataṅgapārameśvara Āgama
MatPur	Matsya Purāṇa
Mayam	Mayamata
MedKo	Medinī Kośa
Megh	Meghadūta
MilPañ	Milinda Pañha
MīmNyPrak	Mīmāṃsānyāya Prakāśa (Āpodeva)
MīmSū	Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra (with Śābara Bhāṣya)
MKā	Mokṣa-Kārikā
Mṛcch	Mṛcchakaṭika
MṛgĀ	Mṛgendra Āgama
Mudrā	Mudrārākṣasa
Mūl	Mūlācāra (Ācārya Vaṭṭakera)
MūMāKā	Mūla Mādhyamaka-Kārikā
MuṇḍUp	Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad
NādaKā	Nāda-Kārikā (Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha)
Nāgā	Nāgānanda
NaiCa	Naiṣadhīyacarita
Ṇāsā	Ṇāṇasāra (Jñānasāra) (Padmasingh Munirāja)
NārBhSū	Nārada Bhakti-Sūtra
NārŚik	Nāradīya Śikṣā
NārŚil	Nārada Śilpa-Śāstra
NN	Nartana Nirṇaya
NLRKo	Nāṭakalakṣaṇaratna Kośa (Sāgaranandin)
NŚ	Nāṭya-Śāstra
Nay	Nayacakra (Mailladhavala)
NT	Netra Tantra
Nigh	Nighaṇṭu
Nir	Nirukta (Yāska)
NīŚat	Nītiśataka
NiSā	Niyamasāra (Kundakundācārya)
NṛPUp	Nṛsiṃhapūrvatāpanīyopaniṣat
NṛKo	Nṛttaratna Kośa
NṛtRat	Nṛttaratnāvalī (Jayasenāpati)
NyDīp	Nyāyadīpikā (Dharma Bhūṣaṇa)
Nyā	Nyāyamañjarī
NySū	Nyāya-Sūtra
NySūBh	Nyāya-Sūtra Bhāṣya
PPur	Padma Purāṇa
PSam	Padma Saṃhitā (Pāñcarātra School)

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Pañcad	Pañcadaśī
Pañ(P)	Pañcādhyāyī (Pūrvārdha) (Rājamalla)
Pañ(U)	Pañcādhyāyī (Uttarārdha) (Rājamalla)
Pañca	Pañcarātra
PkāSā	Pañcāstikāya Sāra (Kundakundācārya)
Pañc	Pañcatantra
Pā	Pāṇini Aṣṭādhyāyī
PāDhā	Pāṇinīya Dhātupāṭha
PāŚik	Pāṇinīya Śikṣā
PPraṬī	Parama Prakāśa Ṭīkā
PPra	Paramātma Prakāśa (Yogīndu Deva)
ParSam	Parameśvara Saṃhitā
PārāŚik	Pārāśara Śikṣā
PTrī	Parātrīśikā (Tantra)
PauṣSam	Pauṣkara Saṃhitā
PSā	Pavayaṇasāra (Pravacanasāra) (Kundakundācārya)
PraCan	Prabodhacandrodaya
PraPañ	Prakaraṇapañcikā
PramMīm	Pramāṇamīmāṃsā (Hemacandrācārya)
PraRat	Prameya Ratnāvalī (Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa)
PSāT	Prapañcasāra Tantra
PraUp	Praśna Upaniṣad
PraYau	Pratijñā Yaugandharāyaṇa
PraNāṭ	Pratimā Nāṭaka
PrH	Pratyabhijñā-Hṛdaya
PravBh	Pravacana Bhāṣya (on SāṃSū) (Vijñānabhikṣu)
Pri	Priyadarśikā
Pug	Puggalapaññatti
Rāga	Rāgavibodha (Somanātha)
Ragh	Raghuvaṃśa
RājTar	Rājataraṅgiṇī
RāVā	Rājavārtika (Bhaṭṭa Akalaṅkadeva)
Rām	Rāmāyaṇa
RāmCam	Rāmāyaṇa Campū
RasGa	Rasagaṅgādhara (Jagannātha)
RP	Ratna Parīkṣā (Īśvara Dīkṣit)
RaPa	Ratnatraya-Parīkṣā
Rat	Ratnāvalī
RauĀ	Raurava Āgama
Rāya	Rāyapasenīyam
ṚV	Ṛgveda

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ṚVPrāt	Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya
ṚSar	Ṛk Sarvānukramaṇī
Ṛtu	Ṛtusaṃhāra
Rūp	Rūpamaṇḍana (Maṇḍana)
SaddhPuSū	Saddharma Puṇḍarīka-Sūtra
ṢaḍBr	Ṣaḍviṃśa Brāhmaṇa
SāDar	Sāhitya-Darpaṇa
Sakalā	Sakalādhikāra (Agastya)
SamāRāj	Samādhirāja
SamSūt	Samarāṅgaṇa-Sūtradhāra (Bhoja)
SV	Sāmaveda
SViBr	Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa
ŚāmPañcā	Śāmba Pañcāśikā
SāṃKā	Sāṃkhya-Kārikā
SāṃSū	Sāṃkhya-Sūtra
SaṃNik	Saṃyutta Nikāya
SDām	Saṅgīta-Dāmodara
SDar	Saṅgīta-Darpaṇa
SMak	Saṅgīta-Makaranda
SRāj	Saṅgītarāja
SR	Saṅgīta-Ratnākara (Śārṅgadeva)
SaṅkSūr	Saṅkalpasūryodaya (Veṅkaṭanātha)
ŚāṅkhĀr	Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka
ŚāṅkhBr	Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa
ŚāṅkhŚrSū	Śāṅkhāyana Śrauta-Sūtra
ŚāTil	Śāradā-Tilaka
SākāT	Sārdhatriśatīkālottara Tantra
Sark	Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa (Alaṅkāra-Śāstra)
SarDSaṅg	Sarvadarśana-Saṅgraha
SaSi	Sarvārthasiddhi (Ācārya Pūjyapāda Devanandī)
ŚBr	Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa
ṢaṭĀ	Ṣaṭkhaṇḍāgama (Puṣpadanta & Bhūtabali)
ṢaṭSan	Ṣaṭsandarbha (Śivagosvāmin)
SātSam	Sātvata Saṃhitā
Saun	Saundarananda
SLah	Saundaryalaharī
SeṬī	Sekoddeśaṭīkā
SiKau	Siddhānta Kaumudī
SiddhSaṅg	Siddhāntaleśa-Saṅgraha
SiddhŚir	Siddhānta-Śiromaṇi
ŚikSamu	Śikṣāsamuccaya

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ŚiL	Śilpalakṣaṇa
ŚiPrak	Śilpa Prakāśa (Rāmacandra Kaulācāra)
ŚiRaKo	Śilparatnakośa (Sthāpaka Nirañjana Mahāpātra)
Śiśu	Śiśupālavadha
ŚDṛ	Śiva Dṛṣṭi
ŚMSt	Śivamahimnastotra
ŚPur	Śiva Purāṇa
ŚSam	Śiva Saṃhitā
ŚSto	Śiva Stotrāvalī
ŚSū	Śiva-Sūtra
ŚSūVā	Śiva-Sūtra Vārttika (Varadācārya)
ŚSūVim	Śiva-Sūtra Vimarśinī (Kṣemarāja)
SkaPur	Skanda Purāṇa
ŚlVā	Ślokavārttika
SP	Somaśambhu Paddhati
SpKā	Spanda-Kārikā
SpNir	Spanda Nirṇaya
ŚrīBh	Śrī Bhāṣya (on Brahma-Sūtra)
ŚrīkBh	Śrīkaṇṭha Bhāṣya (on Brahma-Sūtra)
ŚTaCi	Śrītattvacintāmaṇi
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INDRIYA

Overview

The concept of *indriya*s (mfn.) is all pervasive in the Indian tradition – Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina. Although it may be possible to equate it to the English equivalents of senses, sense-organs and sense-perceptions it is indeed a more complex 'concept' almost a sub-system in Indian thought, philosophy, schools of medicine, literature and the arts.

Also, it has to be comprehended within the larger and broader framework of the fundamental concepts discussed in the **Kalātattvakośa**, volume-I, particularly →*puruṣa* as a macro and micro-model of the universe and the concept of *ātman* and →*prāṇa* as also →*brahman*. It is part and parcel of the concept of →*śarīra* both as body and as →*ātman*. It is inter-related to the concept of the →*bhūta*s and *dravya* discussed elsewhere in this volume.

In its primary meaning it refers to vigour, power, resplendence, and energy. It is related to *retas* (seminal fluid) as prime energy. Indra of the Vedas exemplifies these qualities. The word *indriya* is derived from Indra and it denotes the senses, sense-organs, sense-perceptions and motor-action. The **Ṛgveda** and the **Atharvaveda** are the earliest texts which give a glimpse of the importance of the concept. The Brahmanical ritual and its texts constantly speak of the need for purification and refinement of the senses in the ritual of the *yajña*. Each sense-organ is ritually touched before the commencement of any ritual and throughout these are offered in the →*yajña*. The Upaniṣads are replete with a discussion on the sense-perceptions. The capacity of the senses to move outwards and externalise and to withdraw inwardly, is delineated. The power of the senses as indispensable primary energy is recognised and thus the injunction to harness them, as horses are yoked to the chariot with a charioteer, is often repeated. It is in this context that the concept of →*yoga* as harnessing and yoking, restraint and control is developed. The **Gītā** speaks of the senses practically in each chapter particularly the second where the man of steadfast mind, ever keeps under control the senses.

Emerging, from the speculative thought of the Upaniṣads, the philosophic systems of the Darśanas, particularly Sāṃkhya develops an impressive theory on the relationship of the senses, body, mind and consciousness. Many classifications are suggested. In some schools, there are the five sense-perceptions (*jñānendriya*) and five motor actions (*karmendriya*) and the subtle senses

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(*tanmātras*). The numbers range from five to twenty two, sometimes twenty seven.

In the Ayurvedic system of medicine both Caraka and Suśruta discuss anatomy and physiology but within the basic tenets of the philosophic schools, particularly Sāṃkhya.

The texts on aesthetics and the arts lay fundamental importance to the role of the 'senses' in artistic creation, verbal or visual. The **Nāṭya-Śāstra** speaks of the eye and ear as the primary sense-organs. A theory of aesthetics is evolved around the primary sense-perceptions, the objects of the senses and evocation of analogous states of mind, being in the spectator and hearer. The commentators and interpreters of the theory of *rasa* as also *dhvani* delve deeply into the relational dialogue between and amongst the senses and their power to recreate, re-communicate inner states of mind. Throughout the reciprocal relationship of the senses, body, mind and consciousness (*śarīra, ātmā, cetanā*) is stressed. Later, a formal language of art is evolved through a system of correspondence of sense-perception, motor action and states of feeling or *bhāva*. Architecture, sculpture, painting and dance develop techniques in each of the arts to both, embody as also evoke sense-perceptions. An impressive repertoire of symbols and motifs develops to facilitate the experience of the sensuousness.

Buddhist philosophy and art give equal centrality to the concept. The **Abhidharma Kośa** devotes a full chapter to a discussion on the senses, sense-organs and perceptions. Here also, their primacy is recognised, classifications are made and their capacity of externalisation and internalisation is thoroughly explored. Although there is no denial of the senses in these texts, there is the warning that they can be powerful instruments of temptation.

The Āgamas further refine the attitude to the senses by evolving a system of worship and ritual in →*pūjā*. Now the devotee offers each sense-perception to the deity. The elaborate system of *sevā* in all streams of Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Buddhist and Jaina worship revolve around the symbolic acts of the offering of all sense-perceptions. The Tantras lay down the methodology of internalising the sense-perceptions in individual *sādhanā* and meditation. Indian literature in all languages – Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit and the regional languages is permeated by the acute consciousness of sense-perceptions. An impressive corpus of motifs literary and poetic is available. Indian architecture (→*stūpa*s or temples) embody the five primal elements but coalesce into them the sense-perceptions. Iconography of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina schools can be understood not only as the methodology of encapsulating major myths into single icons in the numerous *bhaṅga*s (deflections) and →*sthāna*s (postures) and *āyudha*s (attributes) but also as the technique of both embodying and re-evoking particular sense-

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perceptions. Indian music, Hindustani and Karnataka (Carnatic) and all schools of dance develop a system of communicating all sense-perceptions as transient states (*vyabhicāribhāvas*). The *sañcārī* portion of the music and dance creates cascades of diverse sense-perception. The overwhelming impression of sensuous but not sentimental form, of these arts which do not become either ethereal or sensual is on account of the chiselled refinement and not denial of the sense-perceptions. This attitude consequently distinguishes these arts from hedonism or epicureanism or sensuality and yet they walk on razor's edge for they take both as vehicle and goal the most potent as also the most vulnerable in the human being. Balance and equilibrium are central to the conception and artistic expression. In this sense the Indian arts carry within themselves the primary meaning of the word as vigour, resplendence, energy and the attitude to the senses in Brahmanical ritual, speculative thought specially the Upaniṣads and the philosophic schools. They are primary and indispensable but they demand control, restraint and refinement.

A somewhat more comprehensive overview was necessary in this case, so as to identify the underlying thread of unity in the discourse on the senses in diverse disciplines within the many streams of the Indian tradition, for it is the unifying vision which holds the levels and dimensions and the differentiations together.

Etymology and Related Terms

The etymology of the word *indriya* as has been mentioned above is derivèd from the word *Indra*. Pāṇini states that *indriya* means that which is seen or perceived by or created by or wished by or given by Indra (here *ātman*). The conventional sense of *indriya* is the organs such as the eye, the ear and the like.

इन्द्रियमिन्द्रलिङ्गमिन्द्रदृष्टमिन्द्रसृष्टमिन्द्रजुष्टमिन्द्रदत्तमिति वा ।

Pā V.2.93

The word *indriya* is irregularly derived (*nipatyate*) from *Indra* (meaning *ātman*, self) – in the sense of 'a sign of Indra', 'perceived by Indra', 'created by Indra', 'endowed with Indra', 'given by Indra' and the like. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

In the **Amara Kośa** (II.6.62) the word *indriya* becomes a synonym for the word *śukra* (semen). Kṣirasvāmin refers to Pāṇini's sūtra quoted above and agrees that *indriya* is derived in the sense of a "sign of Indra", i.e. the self according to Paninian sūtra (V.2.93). In another verse the **Amara Kośa** (I.4.8)

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makes a distinction between the motor-organs and the sense-organs. Here the mind is categorised as the sense-organ:

कर्मेन्द्रियं तु पाय्वादि मनोनेत्रादि धीन्द्रियम् ।

AmKo I.5.8

Anus and other organs are called motor-organs while the mind, eye and others are called sense-organs. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Alongwith sense-organs and motor-organs Yādavaprakāśa in his **Vaijayantī Kośa** has included vitality, vital airs and respiration under the same category:

हृषीकमिन्द्रियं प्राणः प्राणा ना भूम्नि चासवः ।

VaiKo III.6.203ab

Indriya stands for *hṛsīka* (sense-organ), *prāṇaḥ* (vitality), *prāṇāḥ* (vital airs), and *asu* (respiration); [among them the terms] *prāṇaḥ, prāṇāḥ* and *asu* should occur in masculine, (while) *prāṇāḥ* and *asu* appear in plural number. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

He also equates *indriya* with *retas* (seminal fluid) as:

रेतसीन्द्रियम् ... ।

VaiKo VII.3.4a

Indriya stands for *retas*, seminal fluid. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

In the **Vākyapadīya** (I.78–80) Bhartṛhari elaborates on the sense of hearing and sound and word which will be discussed later in the context of language.

Core Meaning

Judging from the derivation of the word *indriya* from Indra (self, *ātman*) and the qualities of vigour, resplendence and energy and the use of the term for sense-organs and sense-perceptions it would appear that despite the complexity of meanings and the classifications of the *indriyas* into motor and sensory, outer and inner, operating at the macro and micro-levels, the word and the concept alludes to the physical, material, sense-organs as also to the non-material attributes of prime seminal energy, vigour and resplendence. As elsewhere in the context of the words *puruṣa* and *brahman* there are the macro – micro-levels and the process of externalisation and internalisation, also emphasis on the integral relationship of the parts and the whole.

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In order to comprehend the etymologies and the core and extended meanings, it is necessary to trace the references to the word and the concept in the early literature where it is first formulated.

Evolution and Development

We know that in the **Ṛgveda** there is the magnificent hymn to *Puruṣa.* In this *sūkta* the cosmic universal Man is described. Here amongst other descriptions occurs the verse:

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत ।
मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद्वायुरजायत ॥
नाभ्या आसीदन्तरिक्षं शीर्ष्णो द्यौः समवर्तत ।
पद्भ्यां भूमिर्दिशः श्रोत्रात् तथा लोकाँ अकल्पयन् ॥

ṚV X.90.13–14

The moon was born from his mind; the Sun
came into being from his eye;
from his mouth came Indra and Agni,
while from his breath the Wind was born.

From his navel issued the Air;
from his head unfurled the Sky,
the Earth from his feet, from his ear the four directions.
Thus have the worlds been organised. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Already a system of correspondence is established between the primal elements and the sense-organs.

Also in the **Ṛgveda** occur many passages in the context of both *ātman* and *śarīra* where the sense-organs are referred to. May the parts of my body (*aṅga*) be purified in the repetitive incarnation. May my speech tongue be full of honey (*madhu*), may I hear abundantly, may my body (including the senses) be full of lustre and purity.

It is in the **Ṛgveda** that Indra is the most powerful and resplendant of the gods. He is full of vigour and strength, lustre and energy.

Indra is the chief of warriors, endowed with matchless power. [The limits of his power cannot be reached; neither by gods, albeit divine, nor mortals, nor yet the waters (cf. ṚV I.100.15).]

In the **Yajurveda** Indra continues to represent vigour and power. The Aśvins, Uṣas and Rātri are requested to adorn Indra with surpassing power as in the following verse:

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उषासानक्तमश्विना दिवेन्द्रं सायमिन्द्रियैः ।
सञ्जानाने सुपेशसा समञ्जाते सरस्वत्या ॥

YV XX.61

Ye Aśvins, Dawn and Night, by day and in the evening, fair of hue,
Accordant, with Sarasvatī, deck Indra with surpassing powers.
(Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

Or, where Aśvins and Sarasvatī are the healing physicians who invest Indra with power.

देवा यज्ञमतन्वत भेषजं भिषजाश्विना ।
वाचा सरस्वती भिषगिन्द्रायेन्द्रियाणि दधतः ॥

YV XIX.12

The Aśvins, the physicians, Gods,
stretched out the healing sacrifice,
Sarasvatī with speech was a physician,
all with heroic powers investing Indra. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

The idea of power is repeated in yet another verse of the **Yajurveda**. *Indriya* now begin to denote Indra – power or the great power which the sacrificer hopes for.

मयीदमिन्द्र इन्द्रियं दधात्वस्मान् रायो मघवानः सचन्ताम् ।

YV II.10

Indra bestow on me that Indra-power! May wealth in full abundance gather round us. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

And so invested Indra is power itself.

स्वाङ्कृतोऽसि विश्वेभ्य इन्द्रियेभ्यो दिव्येभ्यः पार्थिवेभ्यः... ।

YV VII.3

Self-made art thou from all the powers that are in heaven and on the earth. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

The idea of *indriya* as seminal fluid *retas* also occurs in the **Yajurveda** where the nature of human production is suggested.

रेतो मूत्रं वि जहाति योनिं प्रविशदिन्द्रियम् ।
गर्भो जरायुणावृत उल्बं जहाति जन्मना ॥

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ऋतेन सत्यमिन्द्रियं विपानं शुक्रमन्धस ।
इन्द्रस्येन्द्रियमिदं पयोऽमृतं मधु ॥

YV XIX.76

The generative part enters the *yoni*: it leaves aside the *retas* and the *mūtra*.
The caul-invested embryo leaves by its birth the covering folds.
By law came truth and Indra-power, the pure bright drinking-off of juice.
The power of Indra was this sweet immortal milk.
(Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

From these descriptions and suggestions we come to a more explicit enumeration of the sense-organs in the **Atharvaveda**. Here mind is considered as sixth amongst the sense-organs (*indriyas*).

इमानि यानि पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि मनःषष्ठानि मे हृदि ब्रह्मणा संशितानि ।
यैरेव ससृजे घोरं तैरेव शान्तिरस्तु नः ॥

AV XIX.9.5

These five sense-organs, with the mind as the sixth,
within my heart, inspired by Brahman,
by which the awe-inspiring is created,
through them to us be peace! (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Elsewhere both in the **Yajurveda** (XVIII.2) and the **Atharvaveda** there are prayers for the purification of the sense-organs, as in the daily prayers.

ओं वाक् वाक् । ओं प्राणः प्राणः ।
ओं चक्षुश्चक्षुः । ओं श्रोत्रं श्रोत्रम् ।
ओं नाभिः । ओं हृदयम् । ओं कण्ठः । ओं शिरः । ओं बाहूभ्यां यशोबलम् ।
ओं करतलकरपृष्ठे ।

Again the Śivasaṅkalpasūkta of the **Śukla Yajurveda** states:

यज्जाग्रतो दूरमुदैति दैवं तदु सुप्तस्य तथैवैति ।
दूरङ्गमं ज्योतिषां ज्योतिरेकं तन्मे मनः शिवसङ्कल्पमस्तु ॥
येन कर्माण्यपसो मनीषिणो यज्ञे कृण्वन्ति विदथेषु धीराः ।
यदपूर्वं यक्षमन्तः प्रजानां तन्मे मनः शिवसङ्कल्पमस्तु ॥

YV XXXIV.1–2

That mind, the divine which when one is wakeful or asleep, reaches far, which is the far reaching light of all lights (sense of all senses)

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may that mind of mine be of good intent. By which the active and the wise perform the duties in sacrifice and intellectual activities that which is the wonder being inside the beings may that mind of mine be of beautiful intent. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

In the **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** is a beautiful teacher's prayer to Indra:

स मेन्द्रो मेधया स्पृणोतु । अमृतस्य देव धारणो भूयासम् । शरीरं मे विचर्षणम् । जिह्वा मे मधुमत्तमा । कर्णाभ्यां भूरि विश्रुवम् । ब्रह्मणः कोशोऽसि मेधया पिहितः । श्रुतं मे गोपाय ।

TUp I.4.1

Let this Indra deliver me with intelligence!
Oh God (*deva*), I would become possessor of immortality!
May my body be vigorous!
May my tongue be exceeding sweet!
May I hear abundantly with my ears!
Thou art the sheath of Brahma,
With intelligence covered over!
Guard for me what I have heard! (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa**, in the context of the fee to be offered to the priests we come across a verse which speaks of the priest's fee consisting of a hundred garments; for man has a life of a hundred years and then gives a hundred energies (*indriya*) by vigour:

शतायुर्वै पुरुषः शतेन्द्रियः । आयुरेवेन्द्रियं वीर्यमात्मन्धत्ते ॥

ŚBr XIII.4.1.15

(The priests' fee consists of a hundred garments), for man has a life of a hundred (years), and a hundred energies (*indriya*): life, and energy, vigour, he thus gains for himself. (Tr. J. Eggeling)

In the rituals described in the **Taittirīya Saṃhitā** and the **Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra** specially in the offering of oblations, *indriya* stands for power and that pleases Indra as in the following verse:

स्वांकृतोऽसि मधुमतीर्न इषस्कृधि विश्वेभ्यस्त्वेन्द्रियेभ्यो दिव्येभ्यः पार्थिवेभ्यः... ।

TSam I.4.2

Thou art he who is appropriated, make our food full of sweetness, for us, to all the powers of sky and earth thee! (Tr. A.B. Keith)

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The context is the ritual of the *soma*-cups offered to Savitṛ and other gods. The verse is for the *Upāṃśugraha*, the first libation. The cup with *soma* juice is taken by Adhvaryu and he looks at it, then takes it with his left hand and rubs it.

Bhaṭṭabhāskara commenting on the verse derives the term as '*indreṇa īśvareṇa sṛṣṭebhyaḥ – devāḥ manuṣyāḥ ca*'. So Indra is all gods and men. In another verse:

तुरीयाऽऽदित्य सवनं त इन्द्रियमातस्थावमृतं दिवि ॥

TSam I.4.22

The pressing is thy (Indras) strength, O fourth Āditya! The ambrosia is ready in the sky. (Tr. A.B. Keith)

The *graha* is offered to Āditya with the recitation of above *mantra.*

Bhaṭṭanārāyaṇa interprets the word *indriya* and says it means 'that pleases Indra!' Sāyaṇa understands the word as the sense-organs.

दध्नेन्द्रियकामः ।

KatŚrSū IV.15.23

For obtaining powerful organs (the sacrificer should offer the Agnihotra oblations) with curds (which should not be heated).
(Tr. H.G. Ranade)

The idea of power and vigour is sustained throughout the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** as will be evident from the following:

अथैन्द्रम् । इन्द्रियं वै वीर्यम् । इन्द्र इन्द्रियेणैव तद्वीर्येण प्रजापतिः पुनर्-आत्मानमाप्याययत, इन्द्रियमेनं वीर्यमुपसमावर्तत इन्द्रियं वीर्यमनुकम्-आत्मनोऽकुरुत । इन्द्रियेणोऽएवैष एतद्वीर्येणाप्यायते, इन्द्रियमेनं वीर्यम्-उपसमावर्तते, इन्द्रियं वीर्यमनुकमात्मनः कुरुते ॥

ŚBr III.9.1.15

Then one for Indra. For Indra means power (*indriya*) and vigour; by power and vigour Prajāpati then again strengthened himself, power and vigour turned unto him, and he made power and vigour subject to himself. And so does this one now become strong by means of power and vigour; power and vigour turn to him, and he makes power and vigour subject to himself. (Tr. J. Eggeling)

There are many other references in the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** of the symbolic sacrifice of the body and the senses in the ritual. In the context of *soma*-cup oblations eleven oblations representing each of the senses are offered.

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अथैन्द्रमेकादशकपालं पुरोडाशं निर्वपति । इन्द्रियं वै वीर्यमिन्द्रः । इन्द्रियेणैव तद्वीर्येण वरुणोऽनुसमसर्पत् । तथोऽएवैष एतदिन्द्रियेणैव वीर्येणानुसंसर्पति । तत्रैकं पुण्डरीकं प्रयच्छति ।

ŚBr V.4.5.10

He then prepares a cake on eleven potsherds for Indra; – for Indriya means energy, vigour, and with vigour Varuṇa on that occasion stole along; and in like manner does this one now steal along with energy, with vigour. At this (oblation) he presents one lotus-flower. (Tr. J. Eggeling)

The Upaniṣads employ the imagery of the body and the senses to explain phenomena. However, here also the primary meaning of *indriya* as light, energy and power is sustained. The **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** says:

अथ यद्युदक आत्मानं पश्येत् तदभिमन्त्रयेत – मयि तेज इन्द्रियं यशो द्रविणं सुकृतमिति ।

BṛUp VI.4.6

Now, if one should see himself in water, he should recite over it the formula: 'In me be the vigour, power, beauty, wealth, merit!' (Tr. R.E. Hume)

and again:

पुनर्मामैत्विन्द्रियं पुनस्तेजः पुनर्भगः । पुनरग्निर्धिष्ण्या यथास्थानं कल्पन्ताम् ।

BṛUp VI.4.5

Again to me let vigour come!
Again, my strength; again, my glow!
Again the altars and the fire
Be found in their accustomed place! (Tr. R.E. Hume)

or as in:

इन्द्रियेण ते यशसा यश आदद इति ।

BṛUp VI.4.7

'With power, with glory I take away your glory!' (Tr. R.E. Hume)

So also the **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** considers the senses as strength and glory:

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यच्छतं तदायुरिन्द्रियं वीर्यं तेजो यजमान एकशततम आयुषीन्द्रिये वीर्ये तेजसि प्रतिष्ठितः ।

AitĀr I.2.2

The hundred is life, health, strength, glory; the sacrifice is the hundred and first, resting on life, health, strength, glory.
(Tr. A.B. Keith)

Important as all these developments are for understanding the concept of the *indriya*s denoting power, vigour and radiance, semen (*retas*) and the sense-organs, the real contribution of the Upaniṣads is in the articulation of an attitude to the body and the senses, the sense-perceptions, mind and consciousness as parts of an intrinsically interlocked and interdependent system. Several levels of comprehension can be discerned in the Upaniṣads each a logical development from the Vedic hymns but refined and chiselled now as a world view and a system of thought couched in an imagery which explicates the attitude to the senses and sense-perceptions.

The **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** gives an account of the creation of the universe from the primordial cosmic man:

तस्य वाचा सृष्टौ पृथिवी चाग्निश्च ... प्राणेन सृष्टावन्तरिक्षं च वायुश्च ... चक्षुषा सृष्टौ द्यौश्चादित्यश्च ... श्रोत्रेण सृष्टा दिशश्च चन्द्रमाश्च ... मनसा सृष्टा आपश्च वरुणश्च ... ।

AitĀr II.1.7

By his speech are created earth and fire, by breath the sky and the air are created, by his eye are created the heaven and the sun, by his ear were created the quarters and the moon and by his mind were created the waters and Varuṇa. (Tr. A.B. Keith)

The **Aitareya Upaniṣad** continues with the same speculations as in **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** but this time instead of the sense-perceptions creating the universe as the primordial cosmic Man (*puruṣa*), it is the reverse process, where the sense-organs and sense-perceptions are the ingredients of the cosmic powers in the human person.

अग्निर्वाग्भूत्वा मुखं प्राविशत् । वायुः प्राणो भूत्वा नासिके प्राविशत् । आदित्यश्चक्षुर्भूत्वाऽक्षिणी प्राविशत् । दिशः श्रोत्रं भूत्वा कर्णौ प्राविशन् । ओषधिवनस्पतयो लोमानि भूत्वा त्वचं प्राविशन् । चन्द्रमा मनो भूत्वा हृदयं प्राविशत् । मृत्युरपानो भूत्वा नाभिं प्राविशत् । आपो रेतो भूत्वा शिश्नं प्राविशन् ।

AitUp II.4

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Fire became speech, and entered the mouth. Wind became breath and entered the nostrils. The sun became sight, and entered the eyes. The quarters of heaven became hearing and entered the ears. Plants and trees became hairs, and entered the skin. The moon became mind, and entered the heart. Death became the out-breath (*apāna*), and entered the navel. Water became semen, and entered the virile member. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad** echoes the **Ṛgveda** conception of the cosmic man where the senses are part of his being:

एतस्माज्जायते प्राणो मनः सर्वेन्द्रियाणि च ।
खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः पृथिवी विश्वस्य धारिणी ॥

MuṇḍUp II.1.3

From Him is produced breath (*prāṇa*),
Mind (*manas*), and all the senses (*indriya*),
Space (*kha*), wind, light, water,
And earth, the supporter of all. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Here the senses are related to the primal elements an aspect which is stressed many times. Another verse in the **Praśna Upaniṣad** repeats the idea:

स प्राणमसृजत । प्राणाच्छ्रद्धां खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापः
पृथिवीन्द्रियं मनोऽन्नमन्नाद्वीर्यं तपो मन्त्राः ... ॥

PraUp VI.4

He created life (*prāṇa*); from life, faith (*śraddhā*), space (*kha*), wind, light, water, earth, sense-faculty (*indriya*), mind, food; from food, virility, austerity, sacred sayings (*mantra*)... (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The *indriya*s are also referred to as *deva* as in the **Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad.** Here the context is, a discussion on the really vitalizing and unifying vital breath, the breathing spirit or conscious self. The breathing spirit verily is the intelligential self and the intelligential self is the breathing spirit. When a person is so asleep and sees no dream whatsoever then he becomes in this breathing spirit.

स यदा प्रतिबुध्यते यथाग्नेर्ज्वलतो सर्वा दिशो विस्फुलिङ्गा विप्रतिष्ठेरन्-
एवमेवैतस्मादात्मनः प्राणा यथायतनं विप्रतिष्ठन्ते । प्राणेभ्यो देवाः देवेभ्यो
लोकाः ।

KauṣUp III.3

When he (a person) awakens – as from a blazing fire sparks would

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disperse in all directions, even so from this self (*ātman*) the vital breaths (*prāṇa*) disperse to their respective stations; from the vital breaths the sense-powers (*deva*); from the sense-powers, the worlds. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The vital breath *prāṇa* is the energiser of the movement of the *indriya.*

It may be remembered that earlier in the context of *tyam* and *satyam*, the Upaniṣad had stated, the real *satyam* is beyond the sense-organs (*deva*).

यदन्यद् देवेभ्यश्च प्राणेभ्यश्च तत्सदथ यद्देवाश्च प्राणाश्च तत् त्यम् तदेकया वाचाऽभिव्याह्रियते सत्यमित्येतावदिदं सर्वमिदं सर्वमसि ।

KauṣUp I.6

Whatever is other than the sense-organs (*deva*) and the vital breaths (*prāṇa*) – that is the actual (*sat*). But as for the sense-organs and the vital breaths – that is the yon (*tyam*). This is expressed by this word '*satyam*' (the real). It is as extensive as this world-all. You are this world-all. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Īśa Upaniṣad** also speaks of *indriya* as →*deva.* In the context of the recognition of unity underlying diversity and the all-surpassing paradoxical world being (*ekam*) we are told:

अनेजदेकं मनसो जवीयो नैनद्देवा आप्नुवन् पूर्वमर्षत् ।
तद्धावतोऽन्यानत्येति तिष्ठत्तस्मिन्नपो मातरिश्वा दधाति ॥

ĪśUp 4

Unmoving, the One (*ekam*) is swifter than the mind.
The sense-powers (*deva*) reached not It, speeding on before.
Past others running, This goes standing.
In it Mātariśvan places action. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In one Being it moves and moves not. It is far and near, it is within all this and it is outside all this. Naturally, the sense-powers do not reach it. Here there is no sequential 'transcendence' instead there is the one all-surpassing Being and many manifestations. The sense-powers are one amongst all other phenomena.

The **Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad** makes this even more explicit.

न चक्षुषा गृह्यते नापि वाचा नान्यैर्देवैस्तपसा कर्मणा वा ।
ज्ञानप्रसादेन विशुद्धसत्त्वस्ततस्तु तं पश्यते निष्कलं ध्यायमानः ॥

MuṇḍUp III.1.8

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Not by sight is it grasped, not even by speech,
Not by any other sense-organs (*deva*), austerity, or work.
By the peace of knowledge (*jñāna-prasāda*), one's nature purified –
In that way, however, by meditating, one does behold Him who is without parts. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The idea of the one Being, i.e. *Brahman*, being beyond phenomena is one stream, the other is that the diversity and all parts are part of a whole. This is further developed in the **Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad**. Now all the parts of the microcosm dissolve into the macrocosm.

गताः कलाः पञ्चदश प्रतिष्ठा देवाश्च सर्वे प्रतिदेवतासु ।
कर्माणि विज्ञानमयश्च आत्मा परेऽव्यये सर्व एकीभवन्ति ॥

MuṇḍUp III.2.7

Gone are the fifteen parts according to their station,
Even all the sense-organs (*deva*) in their corresponding divinities!
One's deeds (*karman*) and the self that consists of understanding (*vijñāna-maya ātman*) –
All become unified in the supreme Imperishable. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the **Kena Upaniṣad** the question is asked: who is the real agent in the individuals. By whom is impelled this speech that people utter? The eye, the ear, what god pray? The answer is, that, it is the all conditioning yet inscrutable agent *Brahman*. He (it) permeates all sense-organs and perceptions and yet they are not it for they belong to the mortal world. The immortal soul is beyond these.

श्रोत्रस्य श्रोत्रं मनसो मनो यद् वाचो ह वाचं स उ प्राणस्य प्राणः ।
चक्षुषश्चक्षुरतिमुच्य धीराः प्रेत्यास्माल्लोकादमृता भवन्ति ॥

KeUp I.2

That which is the hearing of the ear, the thought of the mind,
The voice of speech, as also the breathing of the breath,
And the sight of the eye! Past these escaping the wise,
One departing from this world, become immortal. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The relationship of the senses and *prāṇa* (breath) recurs in the Upaniṣad. More than one Upaniṣad returns to the theme of the five bodily life functions (senses) and the all pervasive, but intangible vital breath (*prāṇa*).

The **Praśna Upaniṣad** mentions this many times.

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तेजो ह वा उदानस्तस्मादुपशान्ततेजाः । पुनर्भवमिन्द्रियैर्मनसि संपद्यमानैः ।

PraUp III.9

Heat (*tejas*), verily, is the up-breath (*udāna*). Therefore one whose heat has ceased goes to rebirth, with his senses (*indriya*) sunk in mind (*manas*). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** gives centrality to *prāṇa* (breath) and how the sense-organs, the body and the self (*śarīra*) and *ātmā* all rest on this vital energy (*prāṇa*).

प्राणो वंश इति स्थविरः शाकल्यः । तद्यथा शालावंशे सर्वेऽन्ये वंशाः समाहिताः स्युरेवमस्मिन्प्राणे चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वागिन्द्रियाणि शरीरं सर्व आत्मा समाहितः ।

AitĀr III.2.1

Sthavira Śākalya says that breath is a beam, and that as the other beams rest on the main beam of the house, the eye, the ear, the mind, the speech, the senses, the body, the whole self, rests on this breath (*prāṇa*). (Tr. A.B. Keith)

In the **Chāndogya Upaniṣad** *prāṇa* is clearly considered superior to all other sense-organs. In the fifth *prapāṭhaka* (first *khaṇḍa*) there is the interesting and significant conversation on the rivalry of the five sense-perceptions and whether they are autonomous. While the importance of each of the sense-organs including the mind is accepted, vital breath (*prāṇa*) is considered indispensable and thus superior. All sense-perceptions plead to *prāṇa* to ever stay and recognise its superiority.

The next important theme is the relationship of the senses, body, mind, intellect and consciousness. The **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** expounds this relationship most lucidly. Here a hierarchy of value is also suggested. The metaphor of the horses in a chariot, with the intellect as the charioteer and the senses as horses to the controlled and harnessed, is employed.

In the third, fourth and sixth *vallī* the subject comes up in several contexts.

In the third *vallī* occurs the oft-quoted verse where the metaphor of the horses, reins, chariot, charioteer is used to explain the inter-relationship of the senses, body, mind, intellect and consciousness.

इन्द्रियाणि हयानाहुर्विषयांस्तेषु गोचरान् ।
आत्मेन्द्रियमनोयुक्तं भोक्तेत्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥

KaṭhUp III.4

The senses (*indriya*), they say, are the horses;

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The objects of sense, what they range over.
The self combined with senses and mind
Wise men call 'the enjoyer' (*bhoktṛ*). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The metaphor is repeated in subsequent verses (III.5, 6 and 10; VI.6, 7; and I.26), each time we are reminded: know the embodied soul (*ātman*) as the rider, the body (*śarīra*) the chariot, the intellect (*buddhi*) the charioteer, the mind (*manas*) as the reins: the senses (*indriyāṇi*) are the horses; their objects are the roads on which they wander. The experiencer is the soul (*ātman*) endowed with body, senses, mind and intellect.

यस्त्वविज्ञानवान् भवत्ययुक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाण्यवश्यानि दुष्टाश्वा इव सारथेः ॥
यस्तु विज्ञानवान् भवति युक्तेन मनसा सदा ।
तस्येन्द्रियाणि वश्यानि सदश्वा इव सारथेः ॥

KaṭhUp III.5–6

He who has not understanding (*a-vijñāna*),
Whose mind is not constantly held firm–
His senses are uncontrolled,
Like the vicious horses of a chariot-driver.
He, however, who has understanding,
Whose mind is constantly held firm–
His senses are under control,
Like the good horses of a chariot-driver. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

An ascending order is suggested amongst the different faculties. The wise thus always applies his mind, has the senses subdued like good horses of the chariot.

In the sixth *vallī*, the hierarchy is more explicitly enunciated:

इन्द्रियाणां पृथग्भावमुदयास्तमयौ च यत् ।
पृथगुत्पद्यमानानां मत्वा धीरो न शोचति ॥
इन्द्रियेभ्यः परं मनो मनसः सत्त्वमुत्तमम् ।
सत्त्वादधि महानात्मा महतोऽव्यक्तमुत्तमम् ॥

KaṭhUp VI.6–7

The separate nature of the senses,
And that their arising and setting
Is of things that come into being apart (from himself),
The wise man recognizes, and sorrows not.
Higher than the senses (*indriya*) is the mind (*manas*);

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Above the mind is the true being (*sattva*).
Over the true being is the Great Self (i.e. *buddhi*, intellect);
Above the Great is the Unmanifest (*avyakta*). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the context of the gradation upto the supersensible person, mind is described as superior than the senses.

And higher than the Unmanifest is the cosmic Being (*puruṣa*) all pervading and without sign or symbol (*a-liṅga*) knowing which a man is liberated and goes to immortality.

We are told "let the wise subdue his speech by the mind, subdue his mind by that nature which is knowledge (intellect? *buddhi*) subdue his knowledge in the great soul (*mahātmā*) and subdue all in the greatest soul *puruṣa*" (KaṭhUp III.12–13).

The **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** while urging the pupil to go and seek beyond the reach of the eye, the ear, the speech, or the touch describes the first principle Brahman as the eye of the eye, ear of the ear, speech of the speech, breath of the breath and mind of the mind, and yet beyond all these.

नैव वाचा न मनसा प्राप्तुं शक्यो न चक्षुषा ।
अस्तीति ब्रुवतोऽन्यत्र कथं तदुपलभ्यते ॥

KaṭhUp VI.12

Not by speech, not by mind,
Not by sight can He be apprehended.
How can He be comprehended
Otherwise than by one's saying 'He is'? (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Thus the senses are the very vehicles which have to be transcended in order to reach the goal of liberation. In both the **Kena Upaniṣad** and the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** theme of restraint and discipline is repeated. The means of experiencing the unmanifest *avyakta* is primarily the capacity for restraint and discipline of the senses, subduing and harnessing them through *tapas*. Austerity (*tapas*), restraint (*dama*) and work (*karma*) are the foundations of the mystic doctrine (KeUp III.4.8). Two processes are clear, one of the intrinsic interrelationship of each faculty and the other an ascending order, a gradation and hierarchy of value.

Through a careful perusal of the Upaniṣads one can identify the key to approach the body, senses, mind, intellect and soul. Although the senses and body are primary and indispensable as horses are for a chariot to move, they must be restrained and kept under control. The obvious logic of this approach

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leads to the ultimate concept that the world of name and form (*nāma* and *rūpa*), i.e. all sense-perceptions are the very vehicles for transcending the world of sense-perceptions. Perfection and refinement of sense-perceptions, not denial, is the first demand. The **Kena Upaniṣad** calls for this perfection of all parts of the body and the senses – speech, hearing, sight and for strengthening of all sense-organs. All this is entreated for the sole purpose of not being cut off from the Absolute, the central first principle of Brahman.

At no place in the Upaniṣads is there an indication that the senses are unimportant or unreal or an aspect to be denied for any higher goal of realisation. Instead, it is the recognition and assertion, since they are part and parcel both cause and effect of the primordial cosmic Man (*puruṣa*) and are on indispensable vehicle for experiencing the unmanifest and beyond form (*avyakta* and *pararūpa*). There is possiblility of externalising and internalising of expansion and convergence. The **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** points out that the senses turn to external objects and therefore man sees only these objects not the internal soul *antarātman* but the wise with eyes inwards desirous of immortal nature beholds the absolute.

पराञ्चि खानि व्यतृणत् स्वयम्भूस्तस्मात् पराङ् पश्यति नान्तरात्मन् ।
कश्चिद्धीरः प्रत्यगात्मानमैक्षदावृत्त चक्षुरमृतत्वमिच्छन् ।

KaṭhUp IV.1

The Self existent (*svayambhū*) pierced the openings (of the senses) outward;
Therefore one looks outward, not within himself (*antarātman*).
A certain wise man, while seeking immortality,
Introspectively beheld the Soul (Ātman) face to face.
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

Only the one who was turned inward can experience the formless as also clearly see the world of form (*rūpa*) of the sense-perceptions of taste (*rasa*), smell (*gandha*) and of love (*maithuna*):

आत्मानं रथिनं विद्धि शरीरं रथमेव तु ।
बुद्धिं तु सारथिं विद्धि मनः प्रग्रहमेव च ॥

KaṭhUp III.3.3

Know thou the soul (*ātman*, self) as riding in a chariot,
The body as the chariot.
Know thou the intellect (*buddhi*) as the chariot-driver,
And the mind (*manas*) as the reins. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

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The seeming paradox is another key to a distinctive approach. The more inward the senses go the more the possibility of experiencing both the formless as also the world of form and sense-perceptions. The **Chāndogya Upaniṣad** speaks of the vital breath (*prāṇa*) being yoked in the body and with the very same senses, the mortal man can experience that bodiless self the *ātman.* It elucidates this in the context of the relationship of the body (*śarīra*), death (*mṛtyu*) and the soul (*ātman*).

The man of concentration and attention can direct the senses to know the *ātman.*

> अथ यत्रैतदाकाशमनुविषण्णं चक्षुः स चाक्षुषः पुरुषो दर्शनाय चक्षुः । अथ यो वेदेदं जिघ्राणीति स आत्मा गन्धाय घ्राणम् । अथ यो वेदेदमभिव्याहराणीति स आत्माऽभिव्याहाराय वाक् । अथ यो वेदेदँशृणवानीति स आत्मा श्रवणाय श्रोत्रम् ।
>
> ChUp VIII.12.4
>
> Now, when the eye is directed thus toward space, that is the seeing person (*cākṣuṣa puruṣa*); the eye is [the instrument] for seeing. Now, he who knows "Let me smell this" – that is the Self (Ātman); the nose is [the instrument] for smelling. Now, he who knows "Let me utter this" – that is the Self; the voice is [the instrument] for utterance. Now, he who knows "Let me hear this" – that is the Self; the ear is [the instrument] for hearing. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

It is these nascent or as some say diffused thoughts which develop into the systems of *sādhanā* in the Tantras where the pupil experiences different sense-perceptions at different levels of meditation.

We have thus in the Upaniṣads, the conception of the macro-micro levels of the senses as cause and effect of the primordial cosmic man as also the capacity of internalisation and externalisation. Also there is an organic inter-relationship of the parts and the whole as also an ascending order, a progression and hierarchy of value of the body, senses, mind, intellect and soul. To this must be added the notions of sheathing and overlayering and the relationships of the senses to the *guṇas* (qualities), *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* and three states (*avasthā*) of awakening, dreaming and sleeping.

The **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** brings this up in the discussion of the *pañcakośa* (sheaths). Here Man's nature is delineated from the physical to the psychical and spiritual. The physical is directly produced by food and contains in itself the senses. This physical man breathes, thinks, feels and resolves. He is alive and conscious and he is the vehicle through the very physicality of the body

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and the senses of the man who knows and can reflect finally there is he who transcends the physical and psychical to achieve mystical state.

The verses of the second *vallī* (*Brahma vallī*, first *anuvāka*) and those of the eighth and ninth *anuvāka* have to be read together to grasp the interwebbed reciprocal system which is being enunciated.

The **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad**, the **Praśna Upaniṣad** and the **Maitrī Upaniṣad** discuss the three states (*avasthā*) at some length. It is when the senses are introverted, closed in that an awakened state of consciousness is possible and when all sense-perceptions are active but directionless and unruly that consciousness is asleep. Thus the awakened state (*turya*) is the asleep of the senses and sleeping state (*supta*) is the uncontrolled outward activity of the senses. The **Maitrī Upaniṣad** repeatedly speaks of the restraint and the stilling of the senses as below:

यदा वै बहिर्विद्वान् मनो नियम्येन्द्रियार्थांश्च प्राणो निवेशयित्वा निःसंकल्पस्ततस्तिष्ठेत् ।

MaitUp VI.19

Verily, when a knower has restrained his mind from the external, and the breathing spirit (*prāṇa*) has put to rest objects of sense, thereupon let him continue void of conceptions. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

अथान्यत्राप्युक्तम् - निद्रेवान्तर्हितेन्द्रियः शुद्धतमया धिया स्वप्न इव यः पश्यतीन्द्रियबिलेऽविवशः प्रणवाख्यं प्रणेतारं ... ।

MaitUp VI.25

Now, it has elsewhere been said: 'He, who with senses indrawn as in sleep, with thoughts perfectly pure as in slumber, being in the pit of senses yet not under their control, perceives Him who is called *Om*, a leader, brilliant, sleepless... (Tr. R.E. Hume)

or again:

स्वयोनावुपशान्तस्य मनसः सत्यकामतः ।
इन्द्रियार्थविमूढस्यानृताः कर्मवशानुगाः ॥

MaitUp VI.34

Becomes extinct in its own source,
Because the mind, the Real seeks!
For one confused by things of sense,
There follow action's false controls. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

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In these Upaniṣads there is also the enunciation of another hypothesis of the different principles of creation, viz. the five subtle and gross elements (water, earth, light, air and ether): five organs of the intellect, the five organs of action with their respective objects and of the mind, and intellect, consciousness, thinking and action.

Elaborating further discussion, the sense, sense-perceptions and their place in the universe and within the notion of the physical and psychical man would be possible, the above discussion will make it clear that the sense-organs and perceptions and their objects (*viṣaya*) occupy a very significant place in the speculative thought of the Upaniṣads. We may draw attention only to two other sections of prime importance. In the **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** occurs a passage which make the macro-micro levels and the system of correspondence clear and it sums up the notions and the attitude. The five-foldness of the world and the individual is described:

पृथिव्यन्तरिक्षं द्यौर्दिशोऽवान्तरदिशाः । अग्निर्वायुरादित्यश्चन्द्रमा नक्षत्राणि । आप ओषधयो वनस्पतय आकाश आत्मा । इत्यधिभूतम् ॥ अथाध्यात्मम् – प्राणो व्यानोऽपान उदानः समानः । चक्षुः श्रोत्रं मनो वाक् त्वक् । चर्म मांसंस्नावास्थि मज्जा । एतदधिविधाय ऋषिरवोचत् । पांक्तं वा इदं सर्वम् । पांक्तेनैव पांक्तं स्पृणोतीति ।

TUp I.7

Earth, atmosphere, heaven, quarters of heaven, intermediate quarters;
fire, wind, sun, moon, stars;
water, plants, trees, space, one's body.

– Thus with regard to material existence (*adhi-bhūta*).
Now with regard to oneself (*adhyātma*). –

Prāṇa breath, Vyāna breath, Apāna breath, Udāna breath, Samāna breath;
sight, hearing, mind, speech, touch;
skin, flesh, muscle, bone, marrow.

Having analysed in this manner, a seer has said: 'Fivefold, verily, is this whole world. With the fivefold, indeed, one wins the fivefold.' (Tr. R.E. Hume)

And finally there is the most important passage in the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** where the concept of *yoga* is first lucidly articulated. The context is Man's experience of the *Brahman* and how or when he can know Him. The suggested answer is, 'If one is able to know Him ere his body fall (well and good); (if

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he is unable to), he has to take bodies in the worlds of creation. His form is beyond the range of the eye; none sees him with the eye; with the heart, with the intellect, and with the mind (in proper concentration) is he grasped; they who realise this become immortal. When the five sense-perceptions, alongwith the mind, come to a standstill, and the intellect too no longer stirs, that, they say is the Supreme state. That steady hold back of the senses, they consider as the *yoga*, one should be cautious then, for the *yoga* is likely to be gained and lost'.

What could be a clearer statement of the potentialities of the senses to be internalised so that it was possible to ascend from the purely biological and physical to the psychical and spiritual?

What the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** states pithily, others, particularly Patañjali, develop into a system of physical and psychical discipline. Nevertheless there are certain universals which run as a common thread through these varied interpretations. Stripped from the systems, *yoga* is, as the modern psycho-historians say, the technology of the transformation of human consciousness. The complexity of the methodology of this transformation gives rise to many tendencies and systems. Central to all these is the control of the body and senses, a looking inwards through constant practice and repetition which can lead to a sense of detachment (*vairāgya*) when the binary opposites are unified and the yogin can be *kālātīta* (i.e. he who has transcended time).

And so what is *yoga*? The **Kaṭha**, the **Maitrī**, and the **Śvetāśvetara Upaniṣad** all define it. According to the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** "when cease the five sense knowledges, together with the mind (*manas*). And the intellect (*buddhi*) stirs not. That they say is the highest cause. This they consider as *yoga*."

तां योगमिति मन्यन्ते स्थिरामिन्द्रियधारणाम् ।
अप्रमत्तस्तदा भवति योगो हि प्रभवाप्ययौ ॥

KaṭhUp VI.11

This they consider as Yoga,
The firm holding back of the senses.
Then one becomes undistracted.
Yoga, truly, is the origin and the end. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Maitrī Upaniṣad** goes further by even suggesting techniques:

तया प्राणोंकारमनोयुक्तयोर्ध्वमुत्क्रमेत् तात्वध्यग्रं परिवर्त्य चेन्द्रियाण्य-संयोज्य ।

MaitUp VI.21

Through it, by joining (*yuj-*) the breath, the syllable *Om*, and the

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mind, one may go aloft. By causing the tip of the tongue to turn back against the palate and by binding together (*saṃ-yojya*) the senses, one may, as greatness, perceive greatness. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

or as in:

एकत्वं प्राणमनसोरिन्द्रियाणां तथैव च ।
सर्वभावपरित्यागो योग इत्यभिधीयते ॥

MaitUp VI.25

The oneness of the breath and mind,
And likewise of the senses,
And the relinquishment of all conditions of existence–
This is designated as Yoga. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Ultimately all parts, facilities dissolve and submerge into the vast ocean. Just as the metaphor of the horses, chariot and charioteer explained the relationship of the body-senses, mind, intellect and soul, the metaphor of the rivers flowing into the ocean is pervasive. It suggests the submersion of the many into the one. Alongside is the metaphor of the hub, spokes and wheel which refers to the still immutable centre, the stasis and the spokes and the wheel as the dynamism and movement.

In the **Praśna Upaniṣad** (VI.1, 4) Sukeśā Bhāradvāja asks Paippalāda about a prince of the Kosalas who came to him and asked this question, "Bhāradvāja, do you know the Person with the sixteen parts?" And to the question where is that Person? And what will happen to all created beings. Paippalāda says "Even here within the body, is that Person in whom they say the sixteen parts arise. He created life (*prāṇa*); from life, faith (*śraddhā*), space (*kha*), wind, light, water, earth, sense-faculty (*indriya*), etc. ... but all these will disappear."

Again:

स यथेमा नद्यः स्यन्दमानाः समुद्रायणाः समुद्रं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति । भिद्येते तासां नामरूपे । समुद्र इत्येवं प्रोच्यते । एवमेवास्य परिद्रष्टुरिमाः षोडश कलाः पुरुषायणाः पुरुषं प्राप्यास्तं गच्छन्ति । भिद्येते चासां नामरूपे । पुरुषैत्येवं प्रोच्यते । स एषोऽकलोऽमृतो भवति ।

PraUp VI.5

As these flowing rivers that tend toward the ocean, on reaching the ocean, disappear, their name and form (*nāma-rūpa*) are destroyed, and it is called simply "the ocean" – even so of this spectator these sixteen parts that tend toward the Person, on reaching the Person,

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disappear, their name and form are destroyed, and it is called simply "the Person." That one continues without parts, immortal! (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad** there is the question on the first cause (*Brahma*) and the nature of time (*kāla*), elements (*bhūtas*) and the person (*puruṣa*) – the answer is:

तमेकनेमिं त्रिवृतं षोडशान्तं शतार्धारं विंशतिप्रत्यराभिः ।
अष्टकैः षड्भिर्विश्वरूपैकपाशं त्रिमार्गभेदं द्विनिमित्तैकमोहम् ॥
पञ्चस्रोतोम्बुं पञ्चयोन्युग्रवक्रां पञ्चप्राणोर्मिं पञ्चबुद्ध्यादिमूलाम् ।
पञ्चावर्तां पञ्चदुःखौघवेगां पञ्चाशद्भेदां पञ्चपर्वामधीमः ॥

ŚvUp I.4–5

We understand him (as a wheel), with one felly, with a triple tire,
With sixteen end-parts, fifty spokes, twenty counter-spokes,
With six sets of eights, whose one rope is manifold,
Which has three different paths, whose one illusion (*moha*) has two conditioning causes.
We understand him as a river of five streams, from five sources, impetuous and crooked,
Whose waves are the five vital breaths, whose original source is five-fold perception (*buddhi*),
With five whirlpools, an impetuous flood of fivefold misery,
Divided into five distresses, with five branches. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the verse there is an obvious reference to the three *guṇas*, the five elements (*bhūta*), the five organs of perception (*buddhi-indriya*), the five organs of action (*karmendriya*) and the mind (*manas*). The twenty counterspokes are the ten senses (*indriya*) and their corresponding objects. Also the verse sets the stage for the development of a philosophic school where each of these constituents are discussed at great length.

The Upaniṣads are our principal source for comprehending a very distinctive world-view and the attitude to the body, senses, mind, intellect and consciousness, it will be clear that no absolute antagonism or polarity between mind and matter, or matter and energy is being suggested here. The senses, body, mind, intellect and the consciousness (*ātman*), *Brahman* and *puruṣa* are in a continuum, in ceaseless flux, where transmutation and transubstantiation is possible. Equilibrium and balance, tranquillity and quietude are achieved and attainable through refinement and ultimate submersion of individualities. The Upaniṣads provide the core meaning of the concept of the senses and exemplifying a very

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distinctive approach. These prepare us for developments in the **Gītā** and the Darśanas.

Bhagavad-Gītā

Closely related to the attitudes to the senses and sense-perceptions of the Upaniṣads, is the approach of the **Gītā** to the role of the senses. Chapter after chapter speak of the *indriya* and the need to restrain and control them but not through denial or mortification. In the second chapter, the pairs of opposites of pain and pleasure, of cold and heat are considered as products of the contact of the senses with their objects (*bhāvasparśa*). They have a beginning and an end and are intrinsically impermanent. The man of steadfast mind is 'calm' and undisturbed in the knowledge that the self is unmanifest and immutable (II.20, 25). It can neither be cut, nor burnt, nor wetted or denied, it is eternal, since, all beings emerge from the unmanifested (*avyakta*) and are manifest (*vyakta*) in the interim or middle stage and return to the unmanifested stage in the end (II.28), so what is there to grieve? It is against this discourse that Kṛṣṇa tells Arjuna of the nature of *yoga* and the qualities and attributes of a man of steadfast mind. First and foremost he (Arjuna) must be free from the triad of the three *guṇas*, the several pairs of opposites (*dvandva*) be ever balanced, free from the thought of getting and keeping and established in the self.

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त्रैगुण्यविषया वेदा निस्त्रैगुण्यो भवार्जुन ।
निर्द्वन्द्वो नित्यसत्त्वस्थो निर्योगक्षेम आत्मवान् ॥

BhG II.45

(All Nature is made up of) the three 'constituents' (*guṇa*): these a the Veda's goal. Have done with them, Arjuna: have done with (all) dualities, stand ever firm on Goodness. Think not of gain or keeping the thing gained, but be yourself. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

Thus steadfast and with equanimity detached from the desire of the fruit of success or failure, he can act and fight. This equibalance is *yoga* (II.48). And how does this man of steadfastness, speak, sit and walk (II.54)? Then comes the answer:

यदा संहरते चायं कूर्मोऽङ्गानीव सर्वशः ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थेभ्यस्तस्य प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठिता ॥

BhG II.58

And when he draws in on every side his senses from their proper

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objects as a tortoise (might draw in) its limbs, – firm-stablished is the wisdom of such a man. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

The withdrawal of the 'senses', the inward movement mentioned in the Upaniṣad is again stressed throughout the **Gītā**. The notion of withdrawal and control (*vaśa*) is repeated throughout (II.61). The senses here are turbulent (*pramāthīni*) can violently (*prasabham*) snatch away the mind (II.60). But the self-controlled man, moving among objects with senses under restraint and free from attraction and aversion attains to tranquillity (II.64).

In the twelfth chapter on *bhaktiyoga* again the qualities of the devotees are described. It is those who worship the imperishable, the indefinable, the unmanifested, the omnipresent, the unthinkable, the unchangeable, the immovable, the eternal, having subdued all the senses are of even minded (equanimity) engaged in the welfare of all beings, verily they reach only Myself, me.

ये त्वक्षरमनिर्देश्यमव्यक्तं पर्युपासते ।
सर्वत्रगमचिन्त्यं च कूटस्थमचलं ध्रुवम् ॥
संनियम्येन्द्रियग्रामं सर्वत्र समबुद्धयः ।
ते प्राप्नुवन्ति मामेव सर्वभूतहिते रताः ॥

BhG XII.3–4

But those who revere the indeterminate, Imperishable Unmanifest, unthinkable though coursing everywhere, sublime, aloof, unmoving, firm.

Who hold in check the complex of the senses, in all things equal-minded, taking pleasure in the weal of all contingent beings, these too attain to Me. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

This equanimity is only possible through the subduing of the senses and equanimity towards all polarities of friend and foe, honour and dishonour, heat and cold, pleasure or pain, censure and praise and one who is silent and content such a person of steady mind is dear to me (XII.18-19).

In the thirteenth chapter there is the description of *kṣetra* the field of the human psyche. Here there is a full explanation of the number of sense-perceptions, the mind (*manas*) and intellect:

महाभूतान्यहङ्कारो बुद्धिरव्यक्तमेव च ।
इन्द्रियाणि दशैकं च पञ्च चेन्द्रियगोचराः ॥
इच्छा द्वेषः सुखं दुःखं सङ्घातश्चेतना धृतिः ।
एतत्क्षेत्रं समासेन सविकारमुदाहृतम् ॥

BhG XIII.5–6

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Gross elements, the ego, intellect (*buddhi*), the Unmanifest, the eleven senses, and the five (sense-objects) on which the senses thrive,

Desire, hate, pleasure, pain, *sensus communis*, thought and constancy, – these, in briefest span, are called the field together with their changes. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

The Philosophic Schools: Darśana

What the Upaniṣads and the **Bhagavad-Gītā** articulate in general terms without propounding a systematic school of philosophy, the varied schools of philosophy (*darśana*) crystallise as a system. Some of these schools of philosophy such as →*yoga* are not pure mental intellection, but are guides for practice and attainment of the goal of self realisation, liberation and freedom here and now as *jīvanmukta.*

While it would be impossible nor necessary to even briefly enumerate the principle tenets of each of the schools, it is well to remember that the discussion on the 'senses' the sense-organs and sense-perceptions has to be viewed within the context of the particular school of philosophy and not in isolation. Naturally they occupy a central place as the physical-organs, and perceptions. In Sāṃkhya system the senses, the sense-organs, the sense-objects and sense-perceptions are all discussed within the over arching framework of the notion of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti*, the three *guṇa*s (qualities), the levels of the gross (*sthūla*) and subtle (*sūkṣma*) and interplay of *manas, ahaṃkāra* and *buddhi.* The last three constitute the inner organ (*antaḥ-karaṇa*) which is supposed to be mediùm sized (*madhyama-parimāṇa*) neither small nor immense. They are the powers that open and close the gates, monitoring, controlling and registering whatever is carried through. The psyche of Man in the system is active (*kartar*) through the "five organs of action" and receptive (*bhoktar*) through the "five organs of perceptions." The two sets of five are vehicles respectively of his spontaneity and receptivity. These faculties work outwards (*bāhyendriya*) and are compared to gates and doors, while mind (*manas*), ego (*ahaṃkāra*), intellect, judgement (*buddhi*) are the doorkeepers. Since the mind (*manas*) cooperates directly with the ten faculties (*bāhyendriya*) it is considered to be the eleventh and is called the 'inner sense' (*antar-indriya*).

The **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** states:

बुद्धीन्द्रियाणि कर्णत्वक्चक्षुरसन नासिकाख्यानि ।
वाक्पाणिपादपायूपस्थाः कर्मेन्द्रियाण्याहुः ॥

SāṃKā 26

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The (five) sense-organs are known by the names ear, skin, eye, tongue and nose. [These are called *buddhi-indriya*s because they are the means (*dvāra*) of perceiving sound, etc. by the internal organ.] Sages speak of five organs of action (*karmendriya*) namely voice, hand, foot, organ of excretion and organ of generation.
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

To these ten is added *manas* (mind):

सात्त्विक एकादशकः प्रवर्तते वैकृतादहङ्कारात् ।

SāṃKā 25ab

The group of eleven (*indriya*s), which has the *sattvaguṇa* in predominance, proceeds from the *vaikṛta* variety of *ahaṃkāra* (ego).
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The **Yuktidīpikā** commenting on the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** explains the nature of the sense-organs and sense-perception through the simile of a lamp. Together they are receivers and not illuminators like a lamp or a flame (YuDīp on SāṃKā 28). The various sense-faculties co-operate like the flame, the wick and the oil of a lamp in dispelling darkness and giving light to the shapes and colours round about.

तस्माद्युक्तमेतत् – ग्राहकमिन्द्रियं न तु प्रदीपवत् प्रकाशकम् ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 28

Therefore it is logically established that the organs (sense and action organs) are receivers only and not illuminators like a lamp (flame).
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Also the faculties themselves are of subtle matter but the organs in which they reside are of gross matter. The faculties (as distinct from the organs) being not perceptible are inferable from their activities. *Rajoguṇa* prevails in those of action while *sattvaguṇa*s prevail in those of perception.

Further it is the sense-organs (*buddhi-indriya*) that are connected with the *bhūta*s and the *tanmātra*s, the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** explains:

बुद्धीन्द्रियाणि तेषां पञ्च विशेषाविशेषविषयाणि ।
वाग्भवति शब्दविषया शेषाण्यपि पञ्चविषयाणि ॥

SāṃKā 34

Among these organs, it is the sense-organs that have their objects known as *viśeṣa*s (*bhūta*s) and *aviśeṣa*s (*tanmātra*s). The action

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organ *vāc* has sound as its object; the rest of the action organs have all the five (sound, touch, colour, taste and smell, i.e. *ākāśa*, air, fire, water and earth) as their objects. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The commentary **Yuktidīpikā** explains this further:

भौतिकानि इन्द्रियाणि स्वस्वविषयम् अधिगन्तुमुत्सहन्ते ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 28

The organs made up of the elements (*bhūtas*) are capable of receiving their respective objects. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

एवं हि सांख्यवृद्धा आहुः - आहंकारिकाणीन्द्रियाणि अर्थं साधयितुमर्हन्ति नान्यथा ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 28

Thus declare the experts in Sāṃkhya: the organs are the modifications of *ahaṃkāra*: that is why they are capable of fulfilling their purpose. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The **Sāṃkhya Tattva Kaumudī** raises the question of time in which they function:

साम्प्रतकालं वर्तमानकालं बाह्यमिन्द्रियम् । वर्तमानसमीपमनागतमतीतमपि वर्तमानम् । अतो वागपि वर्तमान-कालविषया भवति ।

TaKau on SāṃKā 33

The group of organs of perception and action known as external sense-organs, functions during the present time. Future which is near to the present should also be taken as the present. For this reason the organ of speech is related to the present object.
(Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The organs of perception and action have the *sāttvika ahaṃkāra* as the material cause:

सात्त्विकाहंकारोपादानकत्वमिन्द्रियत्वम् । तच्च द्विविधं - बुद्धीन्द्रियं कर्मेन्द्रियं च । उभयमप्येतदिन्द्रस्यात्मनश्चिह्नत्वादिन्द्रियमुच्यते । ... तत्र रूपग्रहणलिङ्गं चक्षुः, शब्दग्रहणलिङ्गं श्रोत्रम्, गन्धग्रहणलिङ्गं घ्राणम् । रसग्रहणलिङ्गं रसनम् । स्पर्शग्रहणलिङ्गं त्वक् ।

TaKau on SāṃKā 26

The state of the organs of perception and action has the *sāttvika*

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ahaṃkāra as its material cause. It is twofold: the organ of perception and the organ of action. Both of them being the mark of *Indra*, the self is named *indriya*, the organ of perception and action. Among them the cause to perceive forms (colour and shape) is the organ of sight, the ear is the cause to receive sound, the organ of nose is the cause to receive smell, the tongue is the cause to receive taste, while skin is the organ to receive touch. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

Also like the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** it includes the mind as the eleventh amongst the organs of perception and action:

एकादशस्विन्द्रियेषु मध्ये मन उभयात्मकम्, बुद्धीन्द्रियं कर्मेन्द्रियं च । चक्षुरादीनां वागादीनां च मनोऽधिष्ठितानामेव स्व स्व विषयेषु प्रवृत्तेः । ... संकल्पेन रूपेण मनो लक्ष्यते । आलोचितमिन्द्रियेण 'वस्त्विदम्' इति सम्मुग्धम्, 'इदमेवं, नैवम्' इति सम्यक् कल्पयति विशेषण-विशेष्यभावेन विवेचयतीति यावत् ।

TaKau on SāṃKā 27

Among the eleven organs of perception and action mind has the nature of both, viz. the organ of perception and the organ of action because the organ of the sight and the organ of speech, etc. function to their respective objects only being governed by the mind. Here mind is indicated by its characteristic of determination. The organ of perception perceives the object only as an object first as 'it is an object' it knows it indistinctively (*sammugdham*), while 'it is of this nature', 'it is not of this nature' when considered to be possessed of such and such attributes related to the object, the nature of the object is determined in the proper way. It is the function of the mind. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

As in the case of the Upaniṣads, all these organs of perception and action when controlled and 'harnessed', refined and chiselled, withdrawn become the vehicles of attaining a state of detached emancipation.

The Sāṃkhya-Yoga is thus both philosophy and psychology. The **Yoga-Sūtra** elucidates the techniques, one pointed concentration and giving up all attachments for things of sense in the essence of the system. Successive and gradual transformation of the *tamas* to *rajas* to *sattva* in ascending order is suggested here as in the case of the Upaniṣad on the series of the body, sense, mind, intellect and soul. Each is a step in a ladder one leading to the other. The famous opening of the **Yoga-Sūtra:**

योगश्चित्तवृत्तिनिरोधः ॥ YSū I.2

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Yoga is the restriction of the fluctuations of mind-stuff.
(Tr. J.H. Woods)

It is the mind which is continually transforming itself into the shapes of the objects of which it becomes aware. Its subtle substance assumes the forms of colours of everything presented to it by the senses, memory and emotion. However, it has also the power of transformation, metamorphosis and →*yoga* can still this mind, and the moment of quietude, the inner Man, the life monad stands revealed like a jewel in a pond. The first step in this discipline is the quietening of the senses.

The system of Sāṃkhya and Yoga can be reduced to a chart as follows:

SĀṂKHYA PSYCHOLOGY

PRAKṚTI (undifferentiated primal matter)

↓

Buddhi / Mahat (the suprapersonal potentiality of experiences)

↓

Ahaṃkāra (egoity: a function approaching the data of consciousness and wrongly assigning them to *puruṣa*)

↓

the five *karmendriya* (the faculties of action)	*manas* (the faculty of thought)	the five *jñānendriya* (the faculties of sense)	the five *tanmātra* ["merely (*mātra*) that (*tan*)," mere trifle] (the subtle, primary elements: realised as the inner, subtle counterparts of the five sense experiences, viz. sound, touch, colour-shape, flavour, smell: *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha*) ↓ *parama-aṇu* (subtle atoms: realised in the experiences of the subtle body) ↓ *sthūla-bhūtāni* (the five gross elements, ether, air, fire, water, earth, constituting the gross body and the visible tangible world: realised in sense experiences)

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The formation of the gross elements from the subtle is described as follows: "By dividing each subtle element into two equal parts, and sub-dividing the first half of each into four equal parts, and then adding to the unsubdivided half of each element one subdivision of each of the remaining four, each element becomes five in one" (Pañcad I.27). These compounds are what are known as the gross elements. They are named according to whether the preponderant portion is ether, air, fire, water, or earth.

air	ether
fire	
water	
earth	

ether	air
fire	
water	
earth	

ether	fire
air	
water	
earth	

ether	water
air	
fire	
earth	

ether	earth
air	
fire	
water	

Since ether is experienced as sound, air as touch, fire as colour and shape, water as flavour, and earth as smell, each gross element (being a compound of all five) affects all the senses (Heinrich Zimmer, *Philosophies of India*).

The above classification, we must remember is concerned not only with discovering the truth but also with realising it in life. Personal discipline is the necessary accompaniment of both the systems. If Sāṃkhya enlarged upon the theory, then Patañjali did the same at the practical level of the teaching. The discipline of *yoga* as we know comprises the eight *aṅga*s of self restraint (*yama*), observance (*niyama*), posture (*āsana*), regulation of breath (*prāṇāyāma*), withdrawal of the sense (*pratyāhāra*), steadying the mind (*dhāraṇā*), contemplation (*dhyāna*) and meditative state (*samādhi*). The aim is to assist man to transcend the narrow personalised self which is in bondage to a heightened awareness and vision which brings freedom and emancipation. The key word to this discipline is impersonality. The first demand is the overcoming of the 'ego' and the egoistic 'impulses' and the withdrawal of the senses. It functions as a somatic-psycho system. Its efficacy and validity has been re-affirmed over the centuries.

For our purposes Sāṃkhya and Sāṃkhya Yoga are the most important in the context of the *indriya*s. The other schools of philosophy (*darśana*) the Nyāya, the Vaiśeṣika, the Pūrva Mīmāṃsā and the Vedānta (or Uttara Mīmāṃsā) discuss the role of the *indriya* and present classifications and elaborate on the relation between and amongst the different faculties. However, a detailed enumeration is not possible without outlining the full context of these discourses. Most selectively we have chosen a few excerpts, which throw light on the concept of the *indriya*s and the attitude towards them in some of these schools.

The Nyāya attributed to Gautama (nick-named Akṣapāda, the footeyed one, a significant appellation), devoted principally to logic, recognises four sources of true knowledge, viz. perception (*pratyakṣa*), inference (*anumāna*), analogy (*upamāna*) and credible testimony (*śabda*). Within the system naturally the

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first, perception (*pratyakṣa*) is primary and the first step. Book III of the **Nyāya-Sūtra** discusses in detail the self, the body, the senses and their objects, cognition and the mind. During the discussion several questions are asked and answers are given. The first relates to what constitutes the self and whether it is the internal organ. The self is the basis of judgement in this view. The next question relates to the body whether it is made of earth or of many elements in combinations. Then comes the question of the sense-organs. Are they elemental (*bhautika*)? Gautama's view is that the senses are elemental. In this context, there is the interesting argument of the 'ray' and the eye. From this emerges the question of whether there is more than one sense-organ. The answer is, clearly there are five senses with five kinds of objects for them. Thereafter is the enumeration of specific constitution of the sense-organs and their objects (Book III, verses 61-73). According to this view each sense-organ is composed primarily of the kind of stuff it grasps, thus the eye is made primarily of light, the ear of *ākāśa* etc. The special sense qualities and five elements are:

Elements	**Sense qualities**
Earth	Smell
Water	Taste
Fire or light	Colour
Air	Touch
Ākāśa	Sound

It will be clear from the above that in the case of Upaniṣads, the elements (*bhūtas*) and the *indriyas* are interlocked and a series of correspondence are established. From a discussion on the nature of perception (*pratyakṣa*), the subsequent categories of inference, analogy and credible testimony are discussed.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣikas also deal with the sense-organs and sense-perception, in the over-all discussion of what constitutes freedom, liberation (*mokṣa*) or in the language of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika *niḥśreyasa* (having no better) and *apavarga* (end or completion). Within a complex system which outlines the nature of bondage and the means to disengage from it, the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras** of Kaṇāda discuss in detail the six categories of entitles namely substance (*dravya*), quality (*guṇa*), motion (*karman*), genus (*sāmānya*), species (*viśeṣa*) and inherence (*samavāya*).

According to this view there are nine substances, viz. earth (*pṛthivī*), water (*ap*), fire (*tejas*), air (*vāyu*), ether (*ākāśa*), time (*kāla*), place (*diś*), self (*ātman*) and the internal organ (*manas*) (VaiśSū I.1.5).

Amongst the seventeen qualities are listed colour (*rūpa*), taste (*rasa*), smell (*gandha*), touch (*sparśa*), number (*saṃkhyā*), measures (*parimāṇa*),

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separateness (*pṛthaktva*), contact (*saṃyoga*), disjunction (*vibhāga*), resistance (*paratva*), nearness (*aparatva*), intellect (*buddhi*), pleasure (*sukha*) and pain (*duḥkha*), desire (*icchā*), aversion (*dveṣa*) and effort (*prayatna*) (VaiśSū I.1.6).

The above listing of substance (*dravya*) and qualities (*guṇas*) will make it evident that there is a distinct departure here from the sequence set out by the Upaniṣads of the senses, mind, intellect and soul, as also from the correspondence between the *bhūtas* and the *indriyas* mentioned by the school of Nyāya. The mind here becomes a *dravya*, and the sense-perceptions are one amongst qualities (*guṇa*), the latter neither within the triad of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* or emanating from the triad of *manas, buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra* of the Sāṃkhya system.

The Navya-Nyāya expounds yet a different system. Here a language is developed to describe knowledge and other allied cognitive states and attitudes. A technical terminology is evolved for concepts which deal specifically with cognitive mental states.

The crucial term here is →*jñāna* which is used to denote not merely propositional acts like judging, believing, dis-believing, remembering but also non-propositional states sensing and feeling. This concept of an awareness or cognitive act plays an important role in Navya-Nyāya logic. All categories of Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika are re-examined, specially, the qualities (*guṇas*) of the latter. A further distinction is made amongst the qualities, i.e. those that are manifest (*udbhūta*) and those although present are unmanifested (*anudbhūta*). It is in this context, that there is a long and interesting discussion on colour, taste, smell and touch by all the exponents of the school, viz. Raghunātha, Śaṅkara Miśra and Gaṅgeśa. The discussion revolves around whether the blueness, redness are proper universals or single eternal entities. It is not necessary to follow the full argument of this discourse. For us what is important is that whether in ontology or epistemology, metaphysics or logic there is a most sophisticated discussion on the senses and sense-perceptions.

The Mīmāṃsā Darśanas support a theory of the infallibility of the Vedas and a theory of meaning in sound. While Pūrva Mīmāṃsā delves into the ritual (*karmakāṇḍa*), the Uttara Mīmāṃsā (Vedānta) is the culmination of deep reflection and introspection. In contrast to Sāṃkhya it is non-dualistic and orders its tenets from the Vedic dictum of '*tat tvam asi*' (that art thou). As in the case of all Indian philosophic systems (except of Cārvākas), the Advaita also addresses itself to the quest for liberation (*mokṣa*), the release from bondage (*saṃsāra*). The **Brahma-Sūtra Bhāṣya** of Śaṅkara brings up the subject of the senses, sense-organs, perceptions, *manas* and *buddhi* in many contexts. One amongst this is the question of what constitutes death. It is here that man comprises his

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gross body (*sthūla śarīra*) made up of material substances such as earth, water, etc., his sense-organs and action-organs (organ of speech, locomotion, grasping, sex and excretion), his mind (*manas*), his sense of ego (*ahaṃkāra*) and his internal organ (*buddhi-antaḥkaraṇa*). This listing as we will recognise by now is consistent with those in the Upaniṣads and to an extent the other schools of philosophy, particularly Sāṃkhya. However, to this added the notion of *saṃskāra* (the traces of conditioning and tendencies), the residues (*anuśaya*) and residues of acts performed or incomplete (*vipāka*). Besides there are the karmic residues and the *vāsanās*. At the moment of what may be said to constitute death, the speech function becomes absorbed into the intellectual organ or power of mind (*manas*) and so also all other functions, including *manas* (mind) into breath (*prāṇa*). Now the breath so endowed merges with the individual self (*jīva*) and man stops breathing. The *jīva* (individual self) thus dismembered and disembodied joins the subtle elements (*tanmātras*). These correspond to the five prime elements – earth, water, fire, air and *ākāśa*. The subtle elements are conceived of as minute particles that form the seeds from which grow their gross counterparts. The cluster of the five subtle elements provides a material (subtle body), a *sūkṣma śarīra* that now encloses the *jīva* just as the gross body did during his life.

Then proceeds the progress of the subtle body and the journey after death until there is birth again. The argument is too well-known to be further elaborated upon. Nevertheless it will be clear that the body and the senses are considered to operate on the two levels of the →*sūkṣma* and →*sthūla* (the subtle and the gross) and that death is transition in the cycle of birth and death in the movement of the →*jīva*. These conceptions some are consistent with the Upaniṣads and other divergent had a far-reaching implications in the evolution of theories of aesthetics and the creativity in the arts. We have drawn attention to the notion of harnessing, yoking, restraint and gradation as also of successive refinement and purity of the manifest and unmanifest. To all these has to be added these conceptions of the gross and subtle and of the ceaseless movement of the life-death-life.

Numerous references can be culled out from the primary texts, the few included here, are sample illustrations to be read within the full context of each philosophic school and system.

Together, they both provide the foundation of the disciplines of medicine and mathematics and constitute the ground plan for the superstructure of the Indian arts.

Once theories of art are enumerated they are in turn interpreted through the particular tenets of the philosophic schools. The movement comes full circle

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one amongst the different axes of the circle the conception of and attitude to the *indriyas*.

Grammar

The grammarians (*vaiyākaraṇas*) were concerned with nature of sound, word and meaning. Naturally they had to deal with both sense-organs, sense-perception and the nature of →*śabda* (word). Chief amongst these was Bhartṛhari. The **Vākyapadīya** is replete of deep reflections on the subject. From amongst his many jewels of insight, we quote only one as illustration, specially on the nature of word and sound.

इन्द्रियस्यैव संस्कारः शब्दस्यैवोभयस्य वा ।
क्रियते ध्वनिभिर्वादास्त्रयोऽभिव्यक्तिवादिनाम् ॥
इन्द्रियस्यैव संस्कारः समाधानाञ्जनादिभिः ।
विषयस्य तु संस्कारस्तद्गन्धप्रतिपत्तये ॥
चक्षुषः प्राप्यकारित्वे तेजसा तु द्वयोरपि ।
विषयेन्द्रिययोरिष्टः संस्कारः स क्रमो ध्वनेः ॥

Vāk I.78–80

Those who hold that the word is manifested by the sounds conceive of it in three ways – that a certain fitness is brought about in the sense of hearing, that a fitness is produced in the word itself or that a fitness results in both.

By concentration and by the application of ointment, it is only the visual sense which is perfected. The perfection of the object is for the perception of the smell in it.

According to the view that the visual sense reaches out to the object. It is held that both the object and the sense are perfected by light. Such is the process in the case of the (manifesting) sound.
(Tr. Raghavan Pillai)

Schools of Medicine: Āyurveda

As has been remarked in the over-view, the schools of medicine evolved from the Sāṃkhya and were deeply indebted to Patañjali's **Yoga-Sūtra** also to an extent to Nyāya. Both Caraka and Suśruta view the body and the sense not merely as physical and material entities. They develop a holistic psycho-somatic

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system where the physical, psychical and the spiritual or consciousness are part and parcel of one interlocked, interconnected system. The physical effects the psychical, and the psychical manifest itself in the physical. Perfect equilibrium enables the human to realise higher states of consciousness.

While the **Ṛgveda** had described the primordial cosmic Man →*puruṣa* in conceptual terms, the Āyurveda details the constituents of the human, the micro-*puruṣa*. The anatomical structure is clearly analysed with its bones, spine, lower and upper limbs, the joints, muscles and ligaments. The physiological system is also delineated as an interconnected system of the digestive, the circulatory, respiratory and nervous functions and process. There is emphasis as in Upaniṣads on the processing of food into the fluids and the juices and the final entry into the blood streams. Three types of energies, viz. fire (*pitta*), wind (*vāta*) and phlegm (*kapha*) regulate health: their equilibrium is primary and essential. Disequilibrium are caused by the excess or deficiency of the three constituents of *pitta, vāta* and *kapha* (fire or light, wind and phlegm). Each individual has, his or her particular balance or equilibrium and a particular tendency. The imbalances are the →*doṣa*s of the system. This is evident in his personality. The physician discusses these and the particular disposition (*prakṛti*). Being of pleasurable disposition (*prasanna citta*) is symbolic of health and the contrary of disease. Thus a whole system of symptoms and diagnosis prognosis is developed. The sense-organs and perceptions, their function and their ability for receiving stimulus and processing it before action is delineated. The individual's capacity of cultivating great sensitivity and sharpening of the senses is given great importance. The deficiency or loss of a motor or sensory function is watched with particular care and concern. The loss of any sense-perception or an imbalanced heightening of a particular sense-perception is indicative of disease.

It is within this broad and simply stated system of holistic medicine that we have to view the diverse description of sense-organs and perceptions. Also by now we know the division of the *karmendriya* and the *jñānendriya* or *buddhīndriya* also the fact that the mind (*manas*) is counted as the sixth amongst the sensory perceptions in most systems although not all. We also recognise the capacity of the *indriya* to move outward and be externalised and their capacity for withdrawal, moving inwards and capacity of stilling and quietening.

Both Caraka and Suśruta subscribe to these classification, with minor modifications. Suśruta devotes a full chapter to the configurations of the *bhūta*s (primal elements) in the body, the manifest and unmanifest (*vyakta* and *avyakta*). He divides the senses into *karmendriya* (motor) and *jñānendriya* (sensory),

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enumerates their manifestations, and functions and the possibility of their dysfunction or distortion (*vikāra*). Further he explains the three levels of the operation of the senses, i.e. at the level of the *ādhibhautika* (material), *ādhyātmika* (personal or individual) and *ādhidaivika* (spiritual) (SuSaṃ ŚāSthā I.5–7). He goes on to identify the elements of agreement and disagreement between the Āyurveda system and Sāṃkhya (I.16) and finally, discusses the relationship of body, mind and soul (*ātmanaḥ, śarīra, manaḥ saṃyoga*) (I.17). He relates the *manas* to *sattvaguṇa* and goes on to speak of the *mahābhūtas* (I.14) and their relationship to the body; ultimately he relates all this to the soul. The wheel again comes to full circle by beginning with the *bhūtas* and their constituting the body and the body dissolving into the primal elements. Into this discussion is brought in the role of ego (*ahaṃkāra*), intellect (*buddhi*), thinking cognition (*vicāra*), memory (*smṛti*) and consciousness (*cetanā*) . Thus the senses here as elsewhere in the philosophic schools are neither purely material or flesh nor disassociated from the higher faculties of the human organism. Fundamental and pervasive is the conception of *prāṇa* both as vital energy and as breathing.

अथातो वर्णस्वरीयमिन्द्रियं व्याख्यास्यामः ।

CarSam ISthā I.1

Now (I) shall expound the chapter on complexion and voice.

Cakrapāṇi, the commentator brings us back to the etymology of the word *indriya.*

इन्द्रशब्देन प्राण उच्यते, तस्यान्तर्गतस्य लिङ्गं रिष्टाख्यमिन्द्रियम् ।

Comm. on CarSam ISthā I.1

'Indra' means '*prāṇa*' (vital breath) and the signs indicating its end is known as '*indriya*' or '*riṣṭa*'. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Both Caraka and Suśruta go into the diagnostic aspects. Suśruta tells us of the six ways of knowing about diseases: describes in some detail the symptoms, those that can be known through the sense-organs and through interrogation (SuSam X.7), those that are clearly perceived (*pratyakṣa*) and those that have to be inferred. The connection with the schools of philosophy is clear.

कालबुद्धीन्द्रियार्थानां योगो मिथ्या न चाति च ।
द्वयाश्रयाणां व्याधीनां त्रिविधो हेतुसंग्रहः ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.54

Perverted, negative and excessive use of time, intelligence and sense objects is the threefold cause of both psychic and somatic disorders. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

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Cakrapāṇi comments on this:

इन्द्रियार्थाः शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धास्तत्सहचरितानि द्रव्यगुणकर्माणीन्द्रिय-द्वारोपयुज्यमानानि च ।

Comm. on CarSam SūSthā I.54

(Here Cakrapāṇi has explained) *indriyārtha* as sound, touch, vision, taste and smell along with the associated *dravya, guṇa* and *karma* used by the sense-organs. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

The eighth chapter of Sūtrasthāna in the **Caraka Saṃhitā** is devoted to the *indriya* – sense-organs. Five elements of sense-organs, five matters of sense-organs, five sense objects and five sense-perceptions are described (VIII.3–17) which follow lucidly and state the number and nature of the sense-organs, perception and the role of the mind and again the need for balancing and moderating the mind. They should be read together as a total health systems.

इह खलु पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि, पञ्चेन्द्रियद्रव्याणि, पञ्चेन्द्रियाधिष्ठानानि, पञ्चेन्द्रियार्थाः, पञ्चेन्द्रियबुद्धयोभवन्ति, इत्युक्तमिन्द्रियाधिकारे ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.3

Here are five sense-organs, five matters of sense-organs, five locations of sense-organs, five sense objects and five sense-perceptions, thus said in the context of sense-organs. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

अतीन्द्रियं पुनर्मनः सत्त्वसंज्ञकं, 'चेतः' इत्याहुरेके, तदर्थात्मसंपदायत्तचेष्टं चेष्टाप्रत्ययभूतमिन्द्रियाणाम् ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.4

Mind transcends the sense-organs, it is known as *sattva* while some call it as *cetas*. Its action is dependent on its objects and accomplishment of self and at the same time, it is responsible for the action of sense-organs. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

स्वार्थेन्द्रियार्थसङ्कल्पव्यभिचरणाच्चानेकमेकस्मिन् पुरुषे सत्त्वं, रजस्तमः-सत्त्वगुणयोगाच्च; न चानेकत्वं, नह्येकं ह्येककालमनेकेषु प्रवर्तते; तस्मान्नैककाला सर्वेन्द्रियप्रवृत्तिः ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.5

Apparently, mind, in a person, seems to be more than one because of variations in its own objects, sense-objects and its analytical activity and also due to conjunction with the qualities of *rajas, tamas* and *sattva*; but, in fact, there is no numerousness. One (mind) does

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not attend to more than one sense at a time that is why there is no activity of all the sense-organs simultaneously. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

यद्गुणं चाभीक्ष्णं पुरुषमनुवर्तते सत्त्वं तत्सत्त्वमेवोपदिशन्ति मुनयो बाहुल्यानुशयात् ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.6

The quality which is predominantly and time and again present in the mind of a person is the basis on which sages have described the mind according to predominance. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

मनः पुरःसराणीन्द्रियाण्यर्थग्रहणसमर्थानि भवन्ति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.7

The sense-organs are capable in perceiving their objects only when they are supported by mind. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

तत्र चक्षुः श्रोत्रं घ्राणं रसनं स्पर्शनमिति पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.8

Visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and tactile are the five sense-organs. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

पञ्चेन्द्रियद्रव्याणि – खं वायुर्ज्योतिरापो भूरिति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.9

Five matters of sense-organs are – *ākāśa*, *vāyu*, *tejas*, *ap* and *pṛthivī*. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

पञ्चेन्द्रियाधिष्ठानानि – अक्षिणी कर्णौ नासिके जिह्वा त्वक् चेति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.10

Eyes, ears, nostrils, tongue and skin – these five are locations of sense-organs. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

पञ्चेन्द्रियार्थाः – शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धाः ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.11

Five sense-objects are – sound, touch, vision, taste and smell. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

पञ्चेन्द्रियबुद्धयः – चक्षुर्बुद्ध्यादिकाः; ताः पुनरिन्द्रयेन्द्रियार्थसत्त्वात्मसन्निकर्षजाः, क्षणिका, निश्चयात्मकाश्च, इत्येतत् पञ्चपञ्चकम् ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.12

Five sense-perceptions are visual perception etc. These are produced

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by the contact of sense-organ, sense objects, mind and self. They are momentary and determinative. This is about five pentads. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

मनो मनोर्थो बुद्धिरात्मा चेत्यध्यात्मद्रव्यगुणसंग्रहः शुभाशुभप्रवृत्तिनिवृत्तिहेतुश्च, द्रव्याश्रितं च कर्म; यदुच्यते क्रियेति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.13

Mind, objects of mind, intellect and self are, in brief, the substances and qualities pertaining to self. This entire group is the cause of inclination towards and abstaining from auspicious and inauspicious acts respectively. Action (also) known as therapeutic measures is dependent on substance. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

तत्रानुमानगम्यानां पञ्चमहाभूतविकारसमुदायात्मकानामपि सतामिन्द्रियाणां तेजश्चक्षुषि, खं श्रोत्रे, घ्राणे क्षितिः, आपो रसने, स्पर्शनेऽनिलो विशेषेणोपपद्यते । तत्र यद्यदात्मकमिन्द्रियं विशेषात्तत्तदात्मकमेवार्थमनुगृह्णाति, तत्स्वभावाद्विभुत्वाच्च ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.14

Among the existent sense-organs which are comprehensible by inference and are composed of combination of the resultants of five *mahābhūtas* – the visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory and tactile organs – have predominance of *tejas*, *ākāśa*, *pṛthivī*, *ap* and *vāyu* respectively. Thus the sense-organs perceive the respective objects according to predominance of their constituent *mahābhūta*, because of their similarity of nature and (specific) capability (for sense-perception). (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

तदर्थातियोगायोगमिथ्यायोगात् समनस्कमिन्द्रियं विकृतिमापद्यमानं यथास्वं बुद्ध्युपघाताय संपद्यते, सामर्थ्ययोगात् पुनः प्रकृतिमापद्यमानं यथास्वं बुद्धिमाप्यायति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.15

In case of the sense-organs along with the mind having been deranged due to excessive, negative and perverted conjunction with their sense objects, the respective sense-perception gets disturbed. Again with their balanced use when all this returns to normalcy, it promotes the respective sense-perception. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

मनसस्तु चिन्त्यमर्थः । तत्र मनसो मनोबुद्धेश्च त एव समानातिहीनमिथ्यायोगाः प्रकृतिविकृतिहेतवो भवन्ति ।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.16

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The object of mind is that which can be thought of. The balanced, excessive, negative and perverted conjunctions are the causes of normalcy and abnormality of the mind and its sense-perceptions. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

तत्रेन्द्रियाणां समनस्कानामनुपतप्तानामनुपतापाय प्रकृतिभावे प्रयतितव्यमेभिर्हेतुभिः; तद्यथासात्म्येन्द्रियार्थसंयोगेन बुद्ध्या सम्यगवेक्ष्यावेक्ष्य कर्माणां सम्यक् प्रतिपादनेन, देशकालात्मगुणविपरीतोपासनेन चेति। तस्मादात्मसहितं चिकीर्षता सर्वेण सर्वं सर्वदा स्मृतिमास्थाय सद्वृत्तमनुष्ठेयम्।

CarSam SūSthā VIII.17

So in order to prevent derangements in sense-organs along with the mind one should make effort to maintain the normalcy by these methods – such as, with conjunction of wholesome sense objects one should perform acts well properly and invariably examining with intellect, and also by regular use of those which are opposite to the qualities of place, time and self. Hence, one who desires to promote his own well-being should follow the entire code of good conduct fully, invariably and cautiously. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

The sequence ends with the significant verse that the soul cannot have knowledge and proceed for action without the *indriya*s:

न कर्तुरिन्द्रियाभावात् कार्यज्ञानं प्रवर्तते ।
या क्रिया वर्तते भावैः सा विना तैर्न वर्तते ॥
जानन्नपि मृदोऽभावात् कुम्भकृन्न प्रवर्तते ।

CaSamŚāSthā III.19–20ab

The soul can not have knowledge and proceed for action without '*indriya*s' such as a potter is helpless in action inspite of his knowledge in absence of earth (to make a pot). (Tr. L.M. Singh)

The *indriya*s have been included in the very definition of *āyu*:

शरीरेन्द्रियसत्त्वात्मसंयोगो धारि जीवितम् ।
नित्यगश्चानुबन्धश्च पर्यायैरायुरुच्यते ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.42

'*Āyus*' is the combination of *śarīra* (body), *indriya* (sense-organs), *sattva* (mind) and *ātman* (soul) and is known by the synonyms *dhāri*, *jīvita*, *nityaga* and *anubandha*. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

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Besides, as we have derived a healthy person is of pleasant disposition (*prasanna*) with a balanced metabolism:

समदोषः समाग्निश्च समधातुमलक्रियः ।
प्रसन्नात्मेन्द्रियमनाः स्वस्थ इत्यभिधीयते ॥

SuSam SūSthā XV.41

A healthy person is he whose humors and metabolic state are in equilibrium, whose functional activities of the tissues and excretory organ are in balance and the soul, senses and mind feel well. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

दोषादीनां त्वसमतामनुमानेन लक्षयेत् ।
अप्रसन्नेन्द्रियं वीक्ष्य पुरुषं कुशलो भिषक् ॥

SuSam SūSthā XV.39

By observing the abnormal functioning of the sense-organs the wise clinicians should by inference assess the disequilibrium of the person.

In contrast the cause of disease is disequilibrium:

इत्यसात्म्येन्द्रियार्थसंयोगः, प्रज्ञापराधः, परिणामश्चेति
त्रयस्त्रिविधविकल्पा हेतवो विकाराणां ... ।

CarSam SūSthā XI.43

Thus, unwholesome conjunction of sense-organs and its objects, intellectual error and 'consequence' (Time), these three with three subdivisions are the causes of disorders. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Thus to remain within the bounds of suitability and wholesomeness is the essence of health. To cross the limits in either direction is the cause of misery.

असात्म्यार्थागमश्चेति ज्ञातव्या दुःखहेतवः ॥

CarSam ŚāSthā I.98cd

Contact with the unsuitable sense objects is the cause of misery.

Just as the limits have been placed for *indriya*s, intellectual propriety have been emphasized which also cause misery.

बुद्ध्या विषमविज्ञानं विषमं च प्रवर्तनम् ।
प्रज्ञापराधं जानीयान्मनसो गोचरं हि तत् ॥

CarSam ŚāSthā I.109

Wrong understanding by the intellect and wrong actions (as a result) should be known as intellectual error (*prajñāparādha*) which is

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committed by the mind. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

धीधृतिस्मृतिविभ्रष्टः कर्म यत् कुरुतेऽशुभम् ।
प्रज्ञापराधं तं विद्यात् सर्वदोषप्रकोपणम् ॥

CarSam ŚāSthā I.102

The unwholesome action performed by one whose intellect, restraint and memory are deranged is known as intellectual error. It vitiates all the *doṣas*. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Health and disease have also been interpreted in terms of happiness and misery (Suśruta I.29) and it is the body with mind and *indriya*s that we experience the sensations:

वेदनानामधिष्ठानं मनो देहश्च सेन्द्रियः ।

CarSam ŚāSthā I.136ab

The site of sensations is mind and body equipped with *indriya*s. Here '*vedana*' denotes only sensations which could be pleasant or unpleasant.

The contact with the tactile sense-organ and mental contact are two types of contacts which bring about happiness and misery. Further, the proper utilization of sense faculties causes happiness and either non-utilization, excessive utilization or wrong utilization causes misery.

From this brief enumeration it will be clear that the *indriya*s play an important crucial role in the maintainance of health – physical and psychical. Neither indulgence nor denial is advised. Discipline, control, balance and equilibrium between and amongst them and with the faculties of cognition *buddhi* and higher centres consciousness (*cetanā*) and soul (*ātman*) is the key principle.

Buddhist Philosophy and Psychology

As in the Darśanas and Āyurveda the concept of senses has to be viewed in Buddhism within the overall worldview and philosophic principles specially notions of primary matter and non-matter.

Discussion on the number of sense-organs, sense-perceptions, mind and consciousness are detailed and complex. On the surface they appear to be similar if not identical with what we have discussed in the context of Sāṃkhya and Yoga. However, a deeper probe reveals fundamental differences.

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Instead of the broad division of the universe into the principles of *puruṣa* and *prakṛti* we have here, a discussion on the living being and the physical world, the five realms of rebirth, the seven abodes of consciousness, the nine dwellings of the sentient being and the four abodes of consciousness (AbhidhKo ch. III). The physical world comprises the three *dhātus* namely the *kāmadhātu*, the *rūpadhātu* and the *arūpyadhātu*. Each of these is inter-related and placed, both as an ascending order vertically but also as overlapping realms horizontally. While the first category denotes the realm of desire, the second refers to pure form (*rūpa*). The third suggests non-form (*arūpa*) or free from matters. To the question how are the *dhātus* arranged? The answer is through an analogy. "As when the cloud (*īśadhara*) rains there is no interval or discontinuity of the drops of water that fall from space, so too there is no interval or discontinuity of universes (*lokadhātus*) in a state of creation and of dissolution."

In these inter-connected realms the senses and their objects penetrate into the sphere of the *kāmadhātu* and *rūpadhātu* and interact with consciousness, intuitive, reflective and receptive. The **Abhidharma Kośa** provides definitions of these terms and explanation on the nature of five types of matter (*skandha*). Amongst these *rūpa skandha* (AbhidhKo I.9–14), comprises:

→*Rūpa* or matter, the five sense-organs, five objects and *avijñapti* (I.9ab). The five organs are the organs of sight, hearing, smell, taste and touch. The five objects of the five organs are visible matter, sounds, odours, taste and tangibles, and *avijñapti* such as *rūpa skandha*.

Further, the points of support of consciousness of these things, viz. the subtle material elements, are the five organs of sight, etc.

After these preliminary statements, the text goes on to examine each of the five objects, visible matter, sound, taste, odour and tangibles.

Chapter II of the **Abhidharma Kośa** is devoted solely to the subject of the *indriya*. It begins with a question what is the meaning of the word *indriya*? The answer given is:

> "इदि परमैश्वर्ये"। तस्य इन्दन्तीति इन्द्रियाणि। अत आधिपत्यार्थ इन्द्रियार्थः।
>
> AbhidhKoBh II.1
>
> The root *idi-* signifies *paramaiśvarya* or supreme authority (Dhātupāṭha I.64). Whatever exercises supreme power or authority is called an *indriya*. Thus in general, *indriya* signifies *adhipati* or ruler. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

In this definition we will recognise the affinities with the primary meaning

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of the term in the Vedas and the early Upaniṣads.

The **Abhidharma Kośa** goes on to enumerate each of the sense-organs of sight, hearing, smell, taste and sensation. The organs of seeing and hearing, it is said, are predominant influence with regard to beauty, protection and with regard to the production of seeing and hearing consciousness and the mental states associated with them and naturally with regard to seeing visible things and hearing sounds.

कस्य चैषां ङाधिपत्यम् ?
चतुर्ष्वर्थेषु पञ्चानामाधिपत्यं ... ॥

चक्षुःश्रोत्रयोस्तावत् प्रत्येकं चतुर्ष्वर्थेष्वाधिपत्यम् । आत्मभावशोभायामन्ध-बधिरयोरकान्तरूपत्वात् । आत्मभावपरिकर्षणे दृष्ट्वा श्रुत्वा च विषमपरिवर्जनात् । चक्षुःश्रोत्रविज्ञानयोः ससंप्रयोगयोरुत्पत्तौ । रूपदर्शनशब्दश्रवणयोश्चासाधारण-कारणत्वे ।

घ्राणजिह्वाकायानामात्मभावशोभायां पूर्ववत्; आत्मभावपरिकर्षणे तैः कवडीकाराहारपरिभोगात् । घ्राणादिविज्ञानानां ससंप्रयोगाणामुत्पत्तौ । गन्धघ्राणरसास्वादनस्प्रष्टव्यस्पर्शनानां चासाधारणकारणत्व इति ।

AbhidhKoBh II.1a

(What is the object of the predominating influence of each *indriya*?)

(According to the School), five are predominate with regard to four things (meanings) (Kā 1a).

The organs of seeing and hearing are predominating influences (1) with regard to beauty, for the body in which they are missing is not beautiful; (2) with regard to protection, for by seeing and hearing, a person avoids that which would destroy him; (3) with regard to the production of the seeing and hearing consciousness, and of the mental states associated with them; and (4) with regard to their special activities, i.e., seeing visible things and hearing sounds.

The organs of smell, taste, and sensation are predominating influences (1) with regard to beauty, as above; (2) with regard to protection, through the consupmtion of solid foods (*kavaḍīkārāhāra*, III.39); (3) with regard to the production of their three consciousnesses; and (4) with regard to their special activities, i.e., perceiving smells, tasting tastes, and touching tangibles. (Tr. L. M. Pruden)

So also the organs of smell, taste and sensation are predominating influences with regard to beauty, protection, consciousness and specific activities.

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After a discussion on the relationship of the five *indriya* to the sexual organs, the vital organs, the mental organs, five sensations such as pleasure (*sukha*) and pain (*vedanā*) and other faculties, there is the further division of the *indriyas* into male and female, pure and impure (AbhidhKo II.10-11b). Finally there is an elucidation on their role in the different types of meditation (*dhyāna*). The following excerpts will make this clear.

स्त्रीत्वपुंस्त्वाधिपत्यात्तु कायात् स्त्रीपुरुषेन्द्रिये ॥

कायेन्द्रियादेव स्त्रीपुरुषेन्द्रिये पृथक् व्यवस्थाप्येते; नार्थान्तरभूते । कश्चिदसौ कायेन्द्रियभाग उपस्थप्रदेशो यः स्त्रीपुरुषेन्द्रियाख्यां प्रतिलभते; यथाक्रमं स्त्रीत्वपुंस्त्वयोराधिपत्यात् । तत्र स्त्रीभावः स्त्र्याकृतिः स्वरचेष्टा अभिप्रायाः । एतद्धि स्त्रिया स्त्रीत्वम् । पुंभावः – पुरुषाकृतिस्वरचेष्टा अभिप्रायाः; एतद्धि पुंसः पुंस्त्वम् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.2cd

It is by reason of their predominance in masculinity and femininity that one must distinguish two sexual organs within the body.

There are two separate sexual organs within the *kāyendriya*, or the organ of touch. These two organs are not distinct from the *kāyendriya*: they too cognize tangible things. But there is a part of the *kāyendriya* that receives the name of the male organ or female organ because this part exercises predominance over masculinity or femininity. Femininity is the physical form, the voice, the hearing, and the dispositions proper to women. The same for masculinity. Since the differences of these two natures are due to these parts of the body, we know that these two parts are predominant through their two natures. Hence they constitute *indriyas*.
(Tr. L.M. Pruden)

निकायस्थितिसंक्लेशव्यवदानाधिपत्यतः ।
जीवितं वेदनाः पञ्च श्रद्धाद्याश्चेन्द्रियं मताः ॥

निकायसभागस्थितौ जीवितेन्द्रियस्याधिपत्यं संक्लेशे वेदनानाम् । तथाहि सुखाय वेदनायां रागोऽनुशेते दुःखायां प्रतिघोऽदुःखासुखायामविद्येत्युक्तं सूत्रे । व्यवदाने श्रद्धादीनां पञ्चानाम् । तथाहि तैः क्लेशाश्च विष्कम्भ्यन्ते मार्गश्चावाह्यते । अत एतेऽपि प्रत्येकमिन्द्रियमिष्टाः ।

AbhidhKoBh II.3

It is by reason of their predominance with regard to the duration of existence, to defilement, to purification, that one considers the vital organ, the sensations, and the five the first of which is faith, as *indriyas*.

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(1) The vital organ is predominant with regard to the prolongation of existence from birth to death but not, (as the Vaibhāṣikas say,) with regard to the connection of one existence with another: this connection depends on the mind.
(2) The five sensations are predominant with regard to defilement, for the sūtra says, "Lust finds its shelter in the sensation of pleasure; hatred, in the sensation of displeasure; confusion, in the sensation of indifference." (On this point the Sautrāntikas are in agreement with the Vaibhāṣikas.)
(3) The five faculties, – faith, force, memory, absorption, and discernment – are predominant with regard to purification, for, through their power, the defilements are disturbed and the Path is brought about. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

चित्ताश्रयस्तद्विकल्पः स्थितिः संक्लेश एव च ।
संभारो व्यवदानं च यावता तावदिन्द्रियम् ॥

तत्र चित्ताश्रयः षडिन्द्रियाणि । एतच्च षडायतनं मौलं सत्त्वद्रव्यम् । तस्य स्त्रीपुरुषविकल्पः स्त्रीपुरुषेन्द्रियाभ्यां स्थितिर्जीवितेन्द्रियेण संक्लेशो वेदनाभिः । व्यवदानसंभरणं पञ्चभिर्व्यवदानं त्रिभिः । अतो नाविद्यादीनामिन्द्रियत्वमिष्टम् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.5

The support of the mind; that which subdivides, prolongs, and defiles this support; that which prepares the purification and which does purify it: these are all *indiryas*.

The support of the mind consists of the six organs of consciousness, from the organ of sight to the mental organ. These are the six internal *āyatanas* which are the primary constituents of a living being.

This sixfold support is differenciated by reason of the sexual organs.

It lasts for a time by reason of the vital organ.

It is defiled by reason of the five sensations.

Its purification is prepared by the five moral faculties, faith, etc.

It is purified by the three pure faculties.

The *dharmas* that possess the characteristic of being predominant with regard to the constitution, the subdivision, etc. of a living being are considered to be *indriyas*. This characteristic is missing in other *dharmas*, in voice, etc. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

सुखम् । शाता ....

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सुखेन्द्रियं कायिकी शाता वेदना । शातेत्यनुग्राहिका सुखेत्यर्थः ।

AbhidhKoBh II.7bc

Agreeable is the *indriya* of pleasure.

"Agreeable" is that which does good, which comforts, is beneficent. Agreeable bodily sensation is termed *sukhendriya.* (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

ध्याने तृतीये तु चैतसी सा सुखेन्द्रियम् ॥

तृतीये तु ध्याने सैव शाता वेदना चैतसी सुखेन्द्रियम् । नहि तत्र कायिकी वेदनाऽस्ति । पञ्चविज्ञानकायाभावात् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.7cd

In the Third *Dhyāna*, agreeable mental sensation is also an *indriya* of pleasure.

(Mental sensation is the sensation associated with mental consciousness.) Agreeable mental sensation of the Third *Dhyāna* is also called *sukhendriya*, an *indriya* of pleasure. This name, moreover, is reserved for agreeable bodily sensation; but in the Third *Dhyāna*, bodily sensation is absent because the five sense consciousnesses are not there. Then, when one speaks of *sukha* or pleasure of the Third *dhyāna*, one means agreeable mental sensation. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

According to the **Abhidharma Kośa**, the number of *indriya*s are twenty-two. Of these five belong to the realm of matter and form (*rūpa-skandha* and *rūpa-dhātu*), along with two others, namely the sex organs of male and female (*puṃ* and *strī*). Others, are called *jīvitendriya* (vitality); they are termed as the *bhautika* because they are constituted by the primal elements. This group interacts with consciousness (*vijñāna*) and broadly belong to the substratum of *rūpa* (form). The remaining are special faculties and belong to *vijñāna-skandha* (consciousness) and mind formation (*citta*). Within the first group, five sense-organs and the two sexual organs are considered external or outward (*bāhyaka*). The second is internal (*ābhyantaraka*).

We will observe that structure of the *indriya*s has been conceived here as the external and internal, pure and impure, and in relation to their special characteristic of the four fields of beauty, protection, consciousness and special activity (i.e. *ātmabhāvesobha parirakṣaṇa vijñāna* and *asādhāraṇakāraṇatva*).

From this basic structure evolves a complex system of the interaction of the five *indriya*s as external receptors and consciousness (*vijñāna*), stimulus, processing and response.

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The discussion on the nature of the *indriyas* in relation to the moral nature of the individual and how they can be *kuśala* (morally wholesome) or *akuśala* (unwholesome) can only be eradicated by *bhāvanā* (here meditation) makes it clear that there are significant differences between the Sāṃkhya and the Buddhist schools. The present classification cannot be equated with the notion of the *jñāna* or *buddhi indriya* and *karmendriya.*

Distinctive to the Buddhist schools as exemplified by the **Abhidharma Kośa** is also the idea that the sense-organs follow an order of evolution with regard to the appearance and disappearance. According to this view the tactile organ (*kāyendriya*) and vitality (*jīvitendriya*) appear first in some beings of the *kāmadhātu*: these beings (life forms) are *aṇḍaja* (born of shell), *jarāyuja* (born of placenta) and *saṃsvedaja* (born of exude). In the other beings who are self registered (*upapādukas*) all six organs of eye, ear, olfactory organ, gustatory organ, tactile organ and *jīvitendriya* appear together.

So at the moment of dissolution (death) in the sphere of *kāmadhātu* and *rūpadhātu* the eye, ear, olfactory and gustatory cease functioning first. The tactile (*kāyendriya*) and *jīvita* (vitality) or mind (*manas*) here is the last to cease functioning. There is considerable importance given to the tactile sense-organ in the Kośa. This emphasis finds confirmation from the most recent researchers in biology which identifies touch as the primary sense.

Of equal interest is the discussion on the consultation or atomic make-ups of the five *indriyas* or sense-organs. As mentioned above the **Abhidharma Kośa** holds the view that →*vijñāna* (consciousness) is generated by the *paramāṇus* or the atoms of both the *indriyas* (sense-organs) and of their objects. The *indriyas* (sense-organs) comprise ten matter composites (*dravya*) or objects. These are the four →*bhūtas* (primal elements) from *bhautika* (constituted objects) and the tactile organs. Thereafter follows a detailed description of the atoms (*paramāṇu*) of each of the sense-organs – eye, ear, olfactory, gustatory and tactile organs. These sections reveal remarkable understanding of the physiological structure of the organs. This brief encapsulation of a subject which is discussed at some length in the **Abhidharma Kośa** will hopefully give a glimpse of the importance and complexity of the discussion on the concept of the *indriya* in Buddhist thought. Scholars ranging from Stcherbatsky to T.R.V. Murti and D.N. Sastri have interpreted and commented on the debate in this text and in others. We could do no more here than condense the argument with a view to underline the fact that the discussion on the concept has to be comprehended within the overall framework of the three *dhātus*, the *skandhas* and notions of moral and immoral, pure and impure and in the context of the role of the *indriyas* in meditation both *dhyāna* and *bhāvanā.*

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Only a few specific quotations given below will facilitate access to the primary text never overlooking the fact that they are part of a larger discourse of thought and a distinctive view point and the ultimate goal of *nirvāṇa*. Thus for example, the following passage draws attention to what happens to the *indriya* at death.

त्याग इदानीं वक्तव्यः – कस्मिन्धातौ म्रियमाणः कतीन्द्रियाणि निरोधयतीति ?
निरोधयत्युपरमन्नारूप्ये जीवितं मनः ।
उपेक्षां चैव रूपेऽष्टौ ... ॥

रूपधातौ म्रियमाणोऽष्टौ निरोधयति – तानि च त्रीणि, चक्षुरादीनि पञ्च । सर्वे ह्युपपादुकाः समग्रेन्द्रिया उपपद्यन्ते म्रियन्ते च ।

... कामे दश नवाष्टौ वा ॥

कामधातौ म्रियमाण उभयव्यञ्जनो दशेन्द्रियाणि निरोधयति । तानि चाष्टौ स्त्रीपुरुषेन्द्रिये च । एकव्यञ्जनो नव । अव्यञ्जनोऽष्टौ । सकृन्मरण एष न्यायः ।

AbhidhKoBh II.15

We have discussed how many *indriya*s, of the nature of retribution, are obtained at conception. Now how many *indriya*s perish at death?

In *Ārūpyadhātu*, dying destroys the vital organ, the mental organ, and the sensation of indifference; in *Rūpadhātu*, it destroys eight *indriya*s; (Kā 15a)

In *Rūpadhātu* one must add the five organs of sense consciousness, the organ of sight, etc. In fact, apparitional beings are born and die with all their organs.

In *Kāmadhātu*, ten, nine, eight; (Kā 15b)

In *Kāmadhātu*, death takes place either at one stroke or gradually. In the first case, eight, nine or ten *indriya*s die, accordingly as the being is without sex, with sex, or bisexual. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

To the question of whether the process is different in those defiled or pure, the answer is:

क्रममृत्यौ तु चत्वारि

क्रमेण तु म्रियमाणश्चत्वारीन्द्रियाणि निरोधयति । कायजीवितमनौपेक्षेन्द्रियाणि । नह्येषां पृथग्निरोधः । एष च न्यायः क्लिष्टाव्याकृतचित्तस्य मरणे वेदितव्यः । यदा तु कुशले चेतसि स्थितो म्रियते तदा –

शुभे सर्वत्र पञ्च च ।

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कुशले चेतसि म्रियमाणः सर्वत्र यथोक्तमिन्द्रियाणि निरोधयति । श्रद्धादीनि च पञ्चाधिकानि ।

AbhidhKoBh II.16ab

Or four when death is gradual (Kā 16a).

In the second case four *indriya*s die lastly and together; the organ of touch, the vital organ, the mental organ and the organ of indifference. These four *indriya*s die at the same time.

The preceding concerns the case where the mind of dying person is soiled or not-soiled-neutral.

In the case of a good death, add all five *indriya*s (Kā 16b).

If ones mind is good, one should, in the three spheres of existence, add the five moral faculties, faith, etc. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

It is obvious that the stage of moral and psychical evolution determines and effects the process of cessation of the *indriya*s.

To the specific question of the role of the *indriya*s in the Path of liberation (*vimuktimārga*) there is the answer:

इन्द्रियप्रकरणे सर्व इन्द्रियधर्मा विचार्यन्ते । अथ कतमच्छ्रामण्यफलं कतिभिरिन्द्रियैः प्राप्यते ।

नवाप्तिरन्त्य फलयोः ...

नवभिरिन्द्रियैः प्राप्तिरन्त्यफलयोः । के पुनरन्त्ये । स्रोत आपत्तिफलमर्हत्त्वं च । के मध्ये । सकृदागामिफलमनागामिफलं च । तत्र स्रोतआपत्तिफलस्य श्रद्धादिभिराज्ञातावीन्द्रियवर्ज्यैर्मनउपेक्षेन्द्रियाभ्यां चेति नवभिः । आज्ञास्यामि-इन्द्रियमानन्तर्यमार्गे वेदितव्यमाज्ञेन्द्रियं च विमुक्तिमार्गे । उभाभ्यां हि तस्य प्राप्तिर्विसंयोगप्राप्तेरावाहकसन्निश्रयत्वाद्यथाक्रमम् । अर्हत्त्वमस्य पुनः श्रद्धादिभिराज्ञास्यामीन्द्रियवर्ज्यैर्मन इन्द्रियेण सुखसौमनस्योपेक्षेन्द्रियाणां चान्यतमेनेति नवभिः ।

AbhidhKoBh II.16c

In the teaching of the *indriya*s all the characteristics of the *indriya*s are examined, both their natures and their operations. We ask then how many *indriya*s come into play in the acquisition of the results of the religious life.

One obtains the two highest results through nine *indriya*s (Kā 16c).

The highest results are the results of Srotāpanna and Arhat, for these two results are the first and last.

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The result of Srotāpanna is obtained through nine *indriyas*: the mental organ, equanimity, and the five moral faculties, faith, etc.; *anājñātamājñāsyāmīndriya* and *ājñendriya.*

Anājñātamājñāsyāmīndriya constitutes *ānantaryamārga* and *ājñā* constitutes *vimuktimārga*: it is through these two *indriyas* that one obtains the results of Srotāpanna, for the first encourages the possession of disjunction from the defilements; the second supports and makes firm this possession.

The result of Arhat is obtained through nine *indriyas*: the mental organ, either satisfaction, pleasure or indifference, the five moral faculties, *ājñendriya* and *ājñātavīndriya.*

Here *ājñendriya* constitutes *ānantaryamārga*, and *ājñātavīndriya* constitutes *vimuktimārga.* (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

The Path both as *bhāvanāmārga* and *vimuktamārga* is described as follows:

दृग्भावनाऽशैक्षपथे नव त्रीणि ... ।

मनःसुखसौमनस्योपेक्षाः श्रद्धादीनि च पञ्च । तानि नवेन्द्रियाणि त्रिषु मार्गेषु त्रीणीन्द्रियाण्युच्यन्ते । दर्शनमार्गे अनाज्ञातमाज्ञास्यामीन्द्रियं भावनामार्गे आज्ञेन्द्रियम् अशैक्षमार्गे आज्ञातावीन्द्रियमिति । किं कारणम् । दर्शनमार्गे ह्यनाज्ञातमाज्ञातुं प्रवृत्तः । भावनामार्गे नास्त्यपूर्वमाज्ञेयं तदेव त्वाजानाति शेषानुशयप्रहाणार्थम् । अशैक्षमार्गे त्वाज्ञातमित्यवगम आज्ञातावः । सोऽस्यास्तीति आज्ञातावी । आज्ञातमवितुं शीलमस्येति वा । क्षयानुत्पादिज्ञानलाभात् । "दुःखं मे परिज्ञातं न पुनः परिज्ञातव्यमिति" तथाभूतस्येन्द्रियमाज्ञातावीन्द्रियम् ।

स्वभावनिर्देशं कृत्वा प्रकारभेदो वक्तव्यः कति सास्रवाणि कत्यनास्रवाणि इन्द्रियाणीत्येवमादि । तत्र तावद्यदेतदनन्तरोक्तमाज्ञास्यामीन्द्रियादिकमेतत् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.9a

Nine *indriyas*, in the Paths of Seeing, of Meditation and of the *Aśaikṣa*, constitute three *indriyas.*

The mental organ, the sensation of the pleasure, the sensation of satisfaction, the sensation of equanimity, the faith, force, memory, absorption and discernment constitute the *anājñātamājñāsyāmīndriya* for the saint who is on the Path of Seeing; *ājñendriya* for the saint who is on the Path of Meditation on the Truths; and *ājñātāvīndriya* for the saint who is on the Path of the *Aśaikṣa* (i.e. the Arhat).

On the Path of Seeing, the saint is engaged in knowing that which he does not know (*anājñātam ājñātuṃ pravṛtta*), namely the

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Four Truths: he thinks "I will know." His *indriya* is then called the *anājñātamājñāsyāmīndriya*. On the Path of Meditation on the Truths, the saint does not have anything new to know, he is a wise one or *ājña*. But in order to cut off the defilements which remain in him, he newly knows and often repeats the Truths that he already knows. His *indriya* is called the *ājñendriya*, the *indriya* of the wise one, or the wise *indriya*.

On the Path of the *Aśaikṣa*, the ascetic becomes conscious that he knows: he obtains the knowledge (*āva=avagama*) that the Truths are known (*ājñātam iti*). Possessing *ājñāta-ava*, he is an *ajñātavin* and his *indriya* is called the *ājñātāvīndriya*.

Or rather, the saint who is an *ājñātāvin* is one who has for his characteristics or habit knowing that the Truth is known: in fact, when the saint has obtained *kṣayajñāna* and *anutpādajñāna*, he knows in Truth, "Pain is known; I have nothing more to know" and the rest. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

And the quality of the Arhat is obtained through eleven *indriya*s.

एकादशभिरर्हत्त्वमुक्तं त्वेकस्य संभवात् ।

अस्ति संभवो यदेकः पुद्गलः परिहाय परिहाय सुखसौमनस्योपेक्षाभिरर्हत्त्वं प्राप्नुयादत एकादशभिरित्युक्तम् । नतु खलु संभवोऽस्ति सुखादीनामेकस्मिन् काले । कथमनागामिनोऽप्येष प्रसङ्गो न भवति । नह्यसौ परिहीणः कदाचित्सुखेन्द्रियेण प्राप्नोति । न च वीतरागपूर्वी परिहीयते । तद्वैराग्यस्य द्विमार्गप्रापणात् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.17ab

It is said that the quality of Arhat is obtained through eleven *indriya*s, because a determined person can so obtain them (Kā 17ab).

A saint can fall many times from the quality of Arhat and reobtain it by means of diverse absorptions, sometimes with the *indriya*s of pleasure (Third *Dhyāna*), sometimes with that of satisfaction (First and Second *Dhyāna*), or sometimes with that of equanimity (*anāgamya*, etc.). But the three *indriya*s never coexist.

But, one would say, why does the Sūtra not speak from this same point of view when it speaks of the quality of Anāgāmin?

The case is different. It does not hold that the saint, fallen from the result of Anāgāmin, gains it again by means of the *indriya* of pleasure. On the other hand, the *vītarāga*, the person detached from all the defilements of *Kāmadhātu*, and who has obtained the result of Anāgāmin cannot fall from this result, because his detachment

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is obtained through two Paths: it is produced through the worldly Path and confirmed through the Pure Path. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

All this can be reduced for purposes of grasping the system into a rough chart as follows:

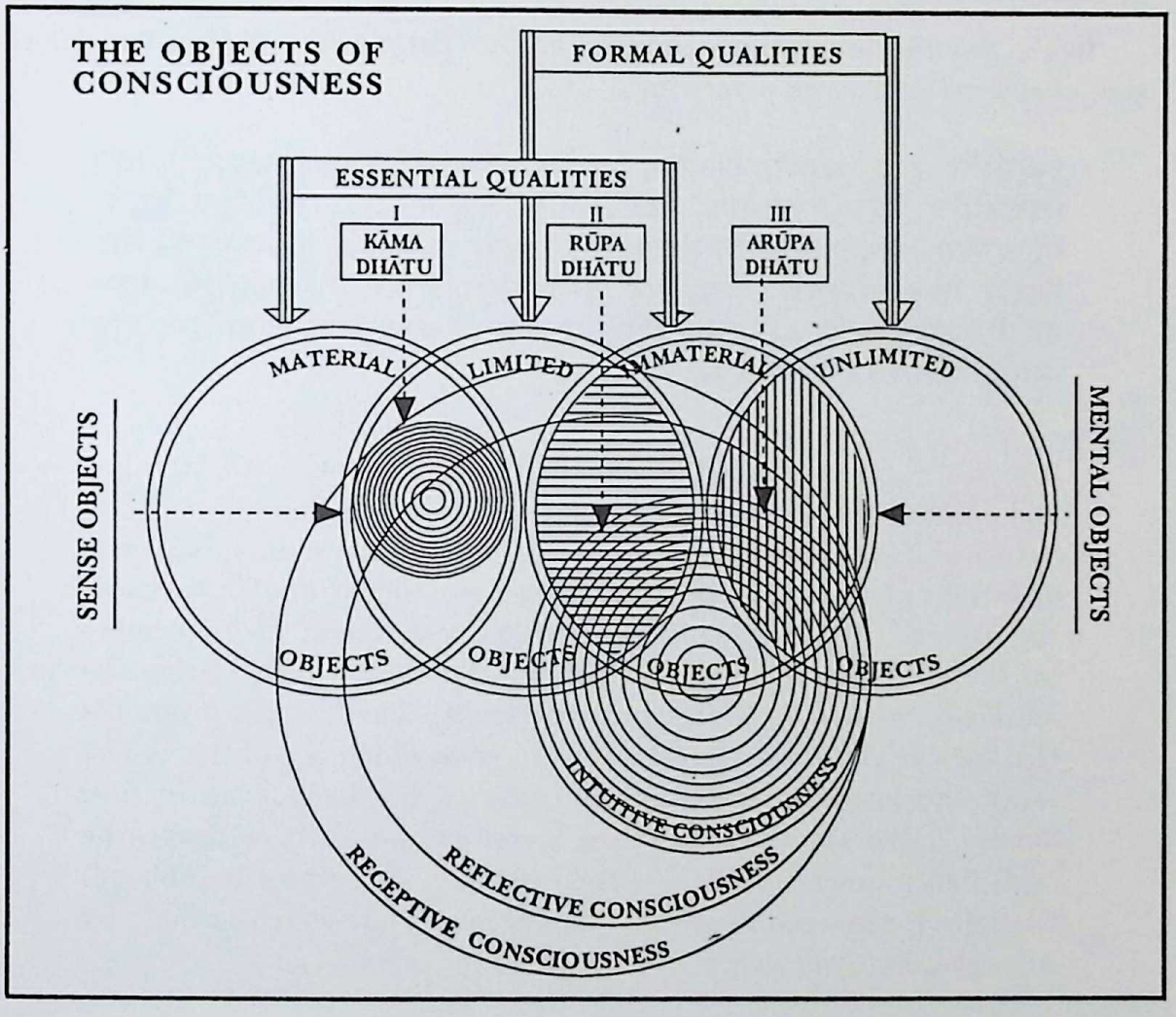

Figure 1: The objects of consciousness

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Jaina Philosophy

In the Indian philosophical systems the idea of the sense-organs originated gradually from the doctrine of the different life-forces in the human body and in Jainism, *indriya* is so called because *indra*, means the soul and the sense-organs, which are described in the Jaina texts as the sign of that soul. In this discipline, it is said that an organ is made of subtle matter called *manovargaṇā* or mental matter.

In the **Sarvārthasiddhi**, a commentary on **Tattvārtha-Sūtra** the definition of *indriya* is given in a very lucid way:

इन्दतीति इन्द्र आत्मा । तस्य ज्ञस्वभावस्य तदावरणक्षयोपशमे सति स्वयमर्थान् ग्रहीतुमसमर्थस्य यदर्थोपलब्धिलिङ्गं तदिन्द्रस्य लिङ्गमिन्द्रियमित्युच्यते ।अथवा लीनमर्थं गमयतीति लिङ्गम् ।आत्मनः सूक्ष्मस्यास्तित्वाधिगमे लिङ्गमिन्द्रियम् । यथा इह धूमोऽग्नेः । एवमिदं स्पर्शनादि करणं नासति कर्तर्यात्मनि भवितुमर्हतीति ज्ञातुरस्तित्वं गम्यते । अथवा इन्द्र इति नामकर्मोच्यते । तेन सृष्टंमिन्द्रियम् ।

SaSi I.14 (p.108)

'*Indatīti Indra*' is the derivation. He who is invested with lordship and wealth is Indra. Here the word means the self. The self is of the nature of knowledge. When there is the destruction-cum-subsidence of *karma*s obscuring knowledge, the self by itself is unable to know the objects. And that which acts as the instrument of knowledge for the self is the sense-organ (*indriya*). Or that, which causes the knowledge of hidden objects, is *liṅgam* (sign). That, which promotes the knowledge of the existence of the soul which is subtle, is the sense. For instance, smoke is the cause of the knowledge of fire. Similarly, the senses such as touch etc. cannot exist without the soul. Hence by means of these the existence of the soul is inferred. Or Indra is the word denoting name *karma*. That which is built by it is the sense (*indriya*). (Tr. S.A. Jain)

The derivative meaning of *indriya* is described in the **Gommaṭasāra Jīvakāṇḍa**:

अहमिंदा जह देवा अविसेसं अहमहंति मण्णंता ।
ईसंति एक्कमेक्कं इंदा इव इंदिये जाण ॥

अहमिन्द्रा यथा देवा अविशेषमहमहमिति मन्यमानाः ।
ईशते एकैकमिन्द्रा इव इन्द्रियाणि जानीहि ॥

GomJīv VII.164

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Know, (that) each one of the senses (*indriya*) is (independent) like the Indras, called Ahamendra-Devas, each of whom considers himself a master, without distinction. (Tr. J.L. Jaini)

Characteristics of *indriya* is described in the **Jīvatattvapradīpikā**, a commentary on **Gommaṭasāra Jīvakāṇḍa** which is almost similar to the Paninian rule (Pā V.2.93).

यदीन्द्रस्यात्मनो लिङ्गं यदि वेन्द्रेण कर्मणा ।
सृष्टं जुष्टं तथा दृष्टं दत्तं चेति तदिन्द्रियं ॥

Comm. on GomJīv (JīvPra) VII.165

That which is a sign of Indra (*ātman* or self), created by Indra, endowed with Indra, perceived by Indra, and given by Indra is known as *indriya*. (Tr. S. Das)

The number of *indriya*s is said to make the possible divisions of worldly soul. It is noted that through the instrumentality of which one can attain cognition, is *indriya*. In the **Tattvārtha-Sūtra** the idea of the fivefold divisions of the *indriya*s is accepted. Again, each of the *indriya*s is of two types: *dravyendriya* 'objective senses' and *bhāvendriya* 'subjective senses'.

पञ्चेन्द्रियाणि ॥

TaSū II.15

The *indriya*s are five in number. (Tr. K.K. Dixit)

*Dravyendriya*s 'objective sense' or 'physical sense organ' are of two kinds *nirvṛtti* (the organ itself, e.g. the pupil of the eye) and *upakaraṇa* (its protecting environment, e.g. the eye-lid etc.) (TaSū II.17). So each formation is of two kinds internal and external. Internal organ means the soul itself which is co-extensive with and of the same form as the organ in which it incarnates. External organ means the material organ which is permeated by the internal organ or the soul. *Bhāvendriya*, subjective senses or psychical sense organs are of two kinds – *labdhi* 'attainment' and *upayoga* 'consciousness' (*labdhyupayogau bhāvendriyam* – TaSū II.18). *Labdhi* means the attainment of manifestation of the sense faculty by the partial destruction, subsidence and operation of the knowledge – obscuring *karma* relating to that sense – while *upayoga* denotes the conscious attention of the soul directed to that sense. The subjective and objective senses are described in the **Gommaṭasāra Jīvakāṇḍa**, as follows:

मदिआवरणखओवसमुत्थविसुद्धी हु तज्जबोहो वा ।
भाविंदियं तु दव्वं देहुदयजदेहचिण्हं तु ॥

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मत्यावरणक्षयोपशमोत्थविशुद्धिर्हि तज्जबोधो वा ।
भावेन्द्रियं तु द्रव्यं देहोदयजदेहचिह्नं तु ॥

GomJīv VII.165

Subjective sense (*bhāva indriya*) is the purification (or the knowing power) arising by the destructive subsidence of the sensitive-knowledge-obscuring-*karma*. (It is) also, the conscious attention of the soul (*bodha*), caused by it. The objective sense (*dravya indriya*) is the physical organ formed by the operation of the body-making-*karma* (*śarīra nāma-karma*). (Tr. J.L. Jaini)

The five senses are touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing (*sparśanarasanaghrāṇacakṣuḥ śrotrāṇi* – TaSū II.19) the functions of which are to determine the various kinds of touch, taste, smell, colour and sound (TaSū II.20). These are the objects of the senses.

In Jainism, various kinds of souls bearing one to five sense organs are described. The one-sensed souls (*ekendriyajīva*) have four vitalities, viz. touch, power of body, age and respiration. Jaina view of the *indriya*s of different beings are described vividly in the **Sarvārthasiddhi** as follows:

वनस्पत्यन्तानामेकम् ॥

एकं प्रथममित्यर्थः । किं तत्? स्पर्शनम् । तत् केषाम्? पृथिव्यादीनां वनस्पत्यन्तानां वेदितव्यम् ।

कृमिपिपीलिका भ्रमरमनुष्यादीनामेकैकवृधानि ॥

कृमिमादिं कृत्वा, स्पर्शनाधिकारात् स्पर्शनमादिं कृत्वा एकैकवृद्धानीत्यभिसम्बन्धः क्रियते । 'आदि' शब्दः प्रत्येकं परिसमाप्यते । कृम्यादीनां स्पर्शनं रसनाधिकम्, पिपीलिकादीनां स्पर्शनरसने घ्राणाधिके, भ्रमरादीनां स्पर्शनरसनघ्राणानि चक्षुरधिकानि, मनुष्यादीनां तान्येव श्रोत्राधिकानीति यथासंख्येनाभिसम्बन्धो व्याख्यातः ... ।

SaSi II.22–23

Upto the end of plants (there is only) one sense.

One means the first what is it? It is the sense of touch. By whom it is possessed? It is possessed by souls inhabiting earth, water, fire and air, bodies and plants.

The worm, the ant, the bee and man, etc. have each one more sense than the preceding one.

We commence with the worm and the sense of touch and increase the senses one by one. The term etc. is added to each. The worm and similar creatures possess the sense of taste in addition to the sense

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of touch. The ant and similar creatures possess the sense of smell in addition to the senses of touch and taste. The bee and creatures of that class possess the sense of sight in addition to the senses of touch, taste and smell. Man and the beings similar to him possess the sense of hearing in addition to the former four. (Tr. S.A. Jain)

It is very interesting to note that plants possess one sense, i.e. touch; worms, etc. possess two senses, i.e. touch and taste; ants, etc. possess three senses, i.e. touch, taste and smell; bees etc. possess four senses, i.e. touch, taste, smell and sight; while men etc. possess five senses, i.e. touch, taste, smell, sight and hearing. The five-sensed beings with minds are called *saṃjñī jīvas*, 'rational beings'.

Maximum range of activity of the senses is stated in the **Gommaṭasāra Jīvakāṇḍa** as:

सण्णिस्स बार सोदे तिण्हं णव जोयणाणि चक्खुस्स ।
सत्तेतालसहस्सा बेसदतेसट्ठिमदिरेया ॥
तिण्णिसयसट्ठिविरहिदलक्खं दसमूलताडिदे मूलं ।
णवगुणिदे सट्ठिहिदे चक्खुप्फासस्स अद्धाणं ॥

संज्ञिनो द्वादश श्रोत्रे त्रयाणां नव योजनानि चक्षुषः ।
सप्तचत्वारिंशत्सहस्राणि द्विशतत्रिषष्ट्यतिरेकाणि ॥
त्रिशतषष्टिविरहितलक्षं दशमूलताडिते मूलम् ।
नवगुणिते षष्ठिहते चक्षुःस्पर्शस्य अध्वानम् ॥

GomJīv VII.169–170

In the rational beings (the cognising capacity) of hearing (extends to) twelve *yojanas*, of the three senses (touch, taste and smell) to nine (*yojanas*) (each), and of the eye to a little over forty seven thousand two hundred and sixty-three (*yojanas*).

The range of ocular vision is one lac minus three hundred and sixty (*yojanas* squared), multiplied by ten and then reduced to its square root then multiplied by nine and divided by sixty would give us the range of sight. (Tr. J.L. Jaini)

The shapes of the inner part of the sense-organs are described in the same text:

चक्खू सोदं घाणं जिब्भायारं मसूर जवणाली ।
अतिमुत्तखुरप्पसमं फासं तु अणेयसंठाणं ॥

चक्षुः श्रोत्रं घ्राणं जिह्वाकारं मसूरयवनाली ।

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अतिमुक्तक्षुरप्रसमं स्पर्शनं तु अनेकसंस्थानम् ॥

GomJīv VII.171

The shape of the eye, ear, nose, and tongue is (respectively) like a lentil grain (*masūra*), the furrow in a barley grain (*yavanālī*), kadamba-flower (*atimukta*) and a hoet (*kṣurapra*) (respectively) while the sense of touch is of various forms (*saṃsthāna*).
(Tr. J.L. Jaini)

The sizes of the internal organs are also presented in the same text:

अंगुलासंखभागं संखेज्जगुणं तदो विसेसहियं ।
तत्तो असंखगुणिदं अंगुलसंखेज्जयं तत्तु ॥

अङ्गुलासंख्यभागं संख्यातगुणं ततो विशेषाधिकम् ।
ततोऽसंख्यगुणितमङ्गुलसंख्यातं तत्तु ॥

GomJīv VII.172

The eye, the ear, the nose and the tougue occupy spaces respectively equal to an innumerable part of a (cubic) finger (*ghanāṅgula*), numerable fold of the former, a little more than the preceding one, and innumerable fold of the last. The last is thus equal to a numerable part of a cubic finger. (Tr. J.L. Jaini)

Tantra-Āgama

Discussion on the *indriyas* in the context of worship and individual *sādhanā* are pervasive. There is a large corpus of texts of Hindu, Buddhist and Jaina Āgamas which delineate upon the role and symbolism of the senses. In some cases specially the Śaiva and Vaiṣṇava Āgama elaborate upon the *pūjā paddhati* and comment on the significance and value of the symbolic offering of the sense-perceptions. Here also a correspondence is established between the primal elements (*bhūtas*) and the sense-organs and perceptions (*indriyas*). Each sense-perception is described but it is the process of worship (→*pūjā*) which is important.

The *sevā* (offering) invariably includes the objects of sight, sound, smell, taste and touch. Thus there is light, music or chanting, incense, food and cloth. Each of these also represent or is complimented with fire, wind, water, earth and suggestion of *ākāśa*. The **Īśānaśivagurudeva Paddhati** gives a graphic account of it. The Vaiṣṇava Āgama again develop their own system. The **Mṛgendra Āgama** divides the senses into *sāttvika* and *rājasika*:

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श्रोत्रं त्वक् चक्षुषी जिह्वा नासा च मनसा सह ।
प्रकाशान्वयतः सत्त्वास्तैजसश्च स सात्त्विकः ॥
वाणी पाणी भगः पायुः पादौ चेति रजोभुवः ।
कर्मान्वयाद्रजोभूयान् गणो वैकारिकोऽत्र यः ॥

MṛgĀ vp XII.3–4

The sense of hearing, touch, seeing, tasting, smelling and the mind are related to a manifestation and hence they are *sāttvika* and the *taijasa* (ego) is also *sāttvika.*

The voice, the hands, the sexual organ, anus, the feet are *rājasika* because they are related with action they belong to the *vaikārika* group which is dominated by *rajas.* (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The **Śāradā-Tilaka** speaks of the internal-organs and the organs of action.

ज्ञानेन्द्रियाणि श्रोत्रं त्वक् दृग् जिह्वा नासिका विदुः ॥
ज्ञानेन्द्रियार्थाः शब्दाद्याः स्मृताः कर्मेन्द्रियाण्यपि ।
वाक्पाणिपादपायूपस्थ संज्ञान्याहुर्मनीषिणः ॥
वचनादानगतयोविसर्गानन्दसंयुताः ।
कर्मेन्द्रियार्थाः संप्रोक्ता अन्तःकरणमात्मनः ॥
मनोबुद्धिरहंकारश्चित्तञ्च परिकीर्त्तितम् ।

ŚāTil I.34cd–37ab

Five internal sense-organs are the ear, the sense of touch, the eye, the tongue, the nose and the object of senses are known as sound and others. Five organs of action are named by the wise as the organ of speech, the hand, the foot, the anus, the organ of sex. The objects of the senses of action are speech, receiving something, movement, excretion and enjoying sexual pleasure. The internal organ of the self are mind, intellect, ego, and *citta.* (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The **Mālinīvijayottara Tantra** speaks of the relative position of *ahaṃkāra*, *manas* and *indriyas*:

तत् त्रिधा तैजसात् तस्मात्मनोऽक्षेशमजायत ।
वैकारिकात् ततोऽक्षाणि तन्मात्राणि तृतीयकात् ॥

MVT I.31

That is threefold (i.e. *ahaṃkāra* is threefold). From its *taijasa* aspect *manas*, the lord of *indriyas* is born. From its *vaikārika* aspect all the *indriyas* are born and from its aspect of *bhūtādi*, the third, the subtle elements emerged. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

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The **Hevajra Tantra** elaborates on the six faculties of sense and the twelve uses of consciousness, very reminiscient of what we have discussed in the **Abhidharma Kośa**:

चक्षुः श्रोत्रं च घ्राणान् च गन्धाश्च जिह्वा कायो मनस्तथा ॥
मोहवज्रादिभिर्युक्ताः षडेतानीन्द्रियाणि च ॥
विषयवैषयिकाभ्यां च द्वादशायतनं भवेत् ।
पञ्चस्कन्धाश्च रूपाद्या विज्ञानान्ता महाकृप ॥
इन्द्रियं विषयं चैव इन्द्रियविज्ञानमेव च ।
धातवोऽष्टादशाख्याता योगिनीनां तु बोधये ॥

HT II.3.33–35

Likewise there are six faculties of sense: the eye, the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind. From spheres and faculties together we then have the twelve bases of consciousness. The five *skandhas* are bodily form, feeling, impulses, power of perception and consciousness. The eighteen spheres of consciousness are the six faculties and six spheres of sense together with the six kinds of consciousness belonging to each pair. (Tr. D.L. Snellgrove)

The **Tantrāloka** refers to the qualities of the cessation of the activity of the senses.

अर्थेषु तद्भोगविधौ तदुत्थे
दुःखे सुखे वा गलिताभिशङ्कम् ।
अनाविशन्तोऽपि निमग्नचित्ताः
जानन्ति वृत्तिक्षयसौख्यमन्तः ॥

TĀl V.126

Those whose mind (although) immersed in the objects of the senses and in the practice of the enjoyment of them and in the pleasure and pain they carry in their wake, remain free of doubt are detached, know the inner pleasure of the cessation of the activity (of the senses). (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The same text elucidates that *yoga* is related to the *indriyas* in order to show the freedom from duality:

सत्येवात्मनि चित्स्वभावमहसि स्वान्ते तथोपक्रियां
तस्मै कुर्वति तत्प्रचारविवशे सत्यक्षवर्गेऽपि च ।
सत्स्वर्थेषु सुखादिषु स्फुटतरं यद्भेदबन्ध्योदयं
योगी तिष्ठति पूर्णरश्मिविभवस्तत्तत्त्वमाचीयताम् ॥

TĀl V.127

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Abiding in the splendour of the essence of consciousness (the luminous abode of the Supreme Subject, *parapramātṛrūpa*) it bestows upon (*upakriyām*) the self limitations constraining it to follow the dallying movement of the inner sense-organs first but later the host of the instruments of knowledge and action. Even in the presence of the object of knowledge in the form of pleasure and so on, the yogin remains in the fullness of the radiant rays arising with brilliance perfectly nullyfying all sorts of duality (*bhedabandhyodayam*). In order to attain steadiness, O, gather that reality. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The **Śiva-Sūtra** tells us of the state of the *yogī* in relation to the *indriya*s:

प्रेक्षकाणीन्द्रियाणि ॥

योगिनश्चक्षुरादीनि इन्द्रियाणि हि संसारनाट्यप्रकटनप्रमोदनिर्भरं स्वस्वरूपम् अन्तर्मुखतया साक्षात्कुर्वन्ति, तत्प्रयोगप्ररूढा विगलितविभागां चमत्काररस-संपूर्णतामापादयन्ति ।

ŚSū III.11

The senses (of the *yogī*) are the spectators (of his acting).

The senses like eyes etc. of the *yogī* witness inwardly their inmost Self full of delight in exhibiting the world drama. By the development of the performance of the drama, they provide to the *yogī* fullness of aesthetic rapture in which the sense of difference has disappeared. (Tr. J. Singh)

The cognizance of the senses in worship and in →*sādhanā* is so primary and fundamental that it is inconceivable to view these systems without them. Now the senses are still in harness and control but more in a spirit of detached celebration. The last excerpt from the **Śiva-Sūtra** is of particular significance. It is delight and joy (*rasa* and *ānanda*) through them but without indulgence and attachment. Indian congregational worship is in one sense that celebration of the senses with food, flowers, inscence and much else with abundance and detachment. The *sādhaka* in turn internalises these.

Manifestation in the Arts

The Indian Arts in theory and practice, ancient or contemporary are an eloquent testimony of all that we have traced through the diverse disciplines and streams. They incorporate the discussion in the speculative thought of the Upaniṣads, create a →*yajña* of drama analogous to Brahmanical ritual, effect

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philosophic discourse and are integral to Āgama and Tantra systems. The senses and the body are neither flesh nor snare. The body is the temple of God with the nine gates or openings and the senses both organs and perceptions have to be refined and chiselled to a point where they become the instrumentality of evoking a transcendental state.

In "*The Square and the Circle of the Indian Arts*" a fuller exposition has been attempted in the context of architecture, sculpture, dance and music. Also Indian painting both mural and miniature is a well laid out system of design, where the evocation of sense-perception through compositional techniques, line and colour play a most crucial role. The texts of poetics, theatre, architecture, sculpture, painting, music and dance, devote full chapters to this. Creative literature, drama or poetry with the distinctiveness of each sense-perception and their combined indistinguishable experience from Kālidāsa to Jayadeva. Feeling and experience are central and thus the psycho-somatic principles of Sāṃkhya and Āyurveda interpenetrate invisibly into the vision content and formal aspects of the Indian Arts.

The critical literature is vast and voluminous, ranging from the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** to medieval texts of poetry, dance, and drama and music, particularly the **Bṛhaddeśī**, and the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara**. Texts of architecture and sections of the Purāṇas are equally relevant. The schools of aesthetics, the interpretators and commentators of the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** discuss the subject threadbare in the context of aesthetic experience, expression and communication. Here we are restricting ourselves only to Bharata's **Nāṭya-Śāstra** seminal sūtras which lay the foundation of artistic theory and practice not only in the arts of poetry, theatre, music and dance but also architecture, sculpture and painting.

Very early in the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** occurs an oft-quoted verse:

महेन्द्रप्रमुखैर्देवैरुक्तः किल पितामहः ।
क्रीडनीयकमिच्छामो दृश्यं श्रव्यं च यद् भवेत् ॥

NŚ I.11

Lord Brahmā (*pitāmaha*) was approached by the gods (*devas*) whose chief was powerful Indra. (They said) we want to have a plaything (*krīḍanīyaka*) which is visual and audible (*dṛśyam* and *śravyam*). (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

After all that we have alluded to in the context of the Upaniṣads the full significance of the myth of Brahmā, the *devas* and Indra will be clearer. Indra the most powerful amongst the *devas* requests for the creation of a world – a unique world of the sense-perceptions, particularly, visual and audible (*dṛśyam* and

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śravyam). The etymology of *indriya*, the appellation of *devas* in the Upaniṣads and this concretisation into a single myth in two verses encapsulates a world-view and a discourse of vast and deep significance. In a way it is both the culmination of a discourse and the beginning of another. For now, it is very faculties of the sense-perceptions which will be conducive to fulfil the four →*puruṣārthas* (goals). Behind the creation of this grand edifice of an artistic world is the assumption as Hiriyanna rightly points out, "that the world of sense equally with the world of the thought is but an appearance of the ultimate truth an imperfect expression of it but yet adequate if rightly approached to point to the underlying unity. Neither our senses nor our mind can grasp this unity but so much of it as they can grasp is sufficient to find out its time, meaning and realise it within ourselves" (M. Hiriyanna, "*Art Experience*").

Bharata develops a system of breaking down the constituents of each part of the body, naturally therefore the sense-organs and the faculty of sound and speech to explore all the possiblities of evoking psychic states. The Upanisadic principles of external and internal, outward and inward sheathing overlaying and establishing correspondences between the physical and psychical, the macro and micro are clear and almost unambiguous if the text is read carefully.

The chapters on *vācika* (speech), *āṅgika* (body and its part, the *aṅgas* and the *upāṅgas*) present an impressive structure of the system. The chapters on *Citrābhinaya* and *Sāmānyābhinaya* pay special attention to the relationship of the senses and feeling. The chapter on *Sāmānyābhinaya* is an exposition on the *Sāttvikābhinaya* but is indeed an explanation of the process and techniques of suggesting sense-perceptions on the stage. Understandably, Bharata takes up the field of what constitutes →*kāma* (not lust but to be understood as feeling experience as distinct from intellect and thought) and therefore the relationship of the five *indriyas* and *manas*.

The following verse gives us an insight although it is necessary to read the full chapter in totality to grasp the full significance.

शब्दं स्पर्शश्च रूपश्च रसो गन्धस्तथैव च ।
इन्द्रियाणीन्द्रियार्थांश्च भावैरभिनयेद्बुधः ॥

VDhPur III.28.2

The competent (actor) should present five senses as well as their objects– sound, touch, form, taste and smell through *bhāvas*–i.e, through natural expressions. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

The followers of Bharata early and late all dwell on the subject. The aesthetic theory is interpreted through the schools of Sāṃkhya, Nyāya and Vedānta

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and Ānandavardhana and Abhinavagupta are the towering figures who enunciate and interpret the theories through the tenets of Kashmir Śaivism. These discussions bring us back to what we have identified in the philosophic schools. Each time the *indriya*s, the sense-perceptions *bāhya* and *āntara* occupy a central place.

Ultimately, with the creation of Jayadeva's **Gīta Govinda** and its interpretation by the Goswamis Rupa and Jiva specially in the **Ujjvalanīlamaṇi**, a new *śāstra* of *rasa* based on sense-perceptions and the dialogue of *jīva* and *ātmā* is enunciated.

The wheel again comes full circle for the texts of *bhakti* and the theology developed is a consummation of a distinctive comprehension of sense-perceptions and their role in metaphysics, philosophic discourse, medicine, arts and mysticism. This is the holistic system and approach of the Indian tradition, where each concept becomes a hub and felly for radiating into differing interpretation as spokes but all held together and regulated within the circumference.

As has been stated, throughout, the special attitude to the body and senses holds a key to the understanding of the Indian Arts, not only at the level of theory but also at the level of practice, be it literature, architecture, sculpture, painting, music or dance. Sanskrit drama (*kāvya*), employs the language of sense-perceptions to evoke emotive states. The elaborate descriptions on sense-perceptions from **Abhijñānaśākuntalam** to Jayadeva's **Gīta Govinda** are the artistic counterparts of the philosophic discourse on the subject. The process of externalisation and internalisation as also the movement from the gross to subtle, from the material to the non-material, from the physical to the psychical is obvious.

A comprehension of the attitude to the senses and its artistic expression will make it clear that while there are differentiated levels, there is no diachotomy between the 'profane' and the 'sacred'. Indian architecture, ancient and medieval once again manifest this distinctive attitude. The Buddhistic *stūpa*, the Jaina temples and the Hindu temples bear testimony to this fact. If the Buddhistic *stūpa* from Sañci to Borobudur is the concretisation of the principles of the *kāya*s and *dhātu*s, the Jaina temples exemplify conception of the *indriya* as expounded in the texts of **Jainendra Siddhānta Kośa** of Jinendra Varni. Hindu temples, Northern, Southern, Eastern, Western temples are a celebration of the sense-perceptions in all their effervescence and yet leading the spectator and audience from the gross to the subtle from the external to the inner. The sheaths (*kośa*) of outer (*bāhya*) and inner (*antar*) are concretised as the multiplicity of images on the outerwalls where each sense-perception burst forth in abundance as the motifs of *yakṣi*s, the *surasundarī*s, the *kinnaras, gandharvas*

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and *apsarases*. Gradually the outer walls give place to the inner quitening. Images melt away and the smell of incense, the sound of bells, the touch of flowers, the light of the lamp takes over from the organs to perception and feeling. The countless images of Indian sculpture encapsulate the attitude to the body and the senses be they Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava, Śākta, Buddhist or Jaina. Outstanding amongst these is naturally the Śiva image as Naṭarāja. It symbolises many conceptions and can be comprehended at the level of myth, philosophy and dance. The image also encodes the five sense-perceptions and the five primal elements. The lord sees and listens, touches and smells as he tramples upon the dwarf of ignorance.

In music and dance, in content form, structure and technique concretise this attitude towards the senses. The overwhelming impression of sensousness in practically all forms of Indian music and dance is neither accident nor preoccupation with flesh and body. It is another Path to →*mokṣa* (liberation).

Conclusion

To conclude one can only state that the world view and the approach is not frozen in the texts enumerated above but is integral to life, everyday and ritual life of the vast majority of Indians. This can be witnessed in everyday life, ceremonies and festivals and on innumerable occasions. Each time it is control, discipline and refinement which is stressed, the celebration and transcendence is achieved only through the empowerment which control, restraint and discipline provides.

Kapila Vatsyayan

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DRAVYA

Overview

Dravya (n.), *vastu, artha*, form a group of words which have several layers of meaning relating to various levels. Although apparently all these words mean 'substance' or 'things' or 'some material' in our world of experience, yet these words in their usage bear a wide range of both denotative and connotative meanings. Varied philosophical schools have discussed the semantic significance, the physical and metaphysical aspects of those denotations and connotations each from their distinctive perspectives. These interpretations have contributed in no small measure in giving the term *dravya* a multidimensional character.

Although generally understood as synonyms of *dravya*, the words *vastu* and *artha* do not convey exactly the same meaning as *dravya*. In contrast to *dravya* or *vastu* the words *adravya* and *avastu* are quite common, which do not only mean a simple negation (*nañ*>*a*) but something more than that in each context. In connection with the word →*artha* which may mean 'money', 'goal', 'purpose', 'target', 'need', 'wealth', and so on, the word *anartha* does not mean only negation; it suggests 'disaster', 'ruin', 'danger', etc. Another cognate word formed from *artha* is →*puruṣārtha* which alludes to the goal of life, viz. *dharma, artha, kāma, mokṣa*. On the other hand the word *paramārtha* means the ultimate reality or eternal goal of life, as explained in the philosophical systems.

In Buddhist philosophy there is discussion on matter and substance. In the Arts the word *dravya* eludes both to material as also quality and attribute.

Etymology and Related Words

The term *dravya*, 'substance' is derived from the root *dru-* 'to become fluid', 'to dissolve', 'to melt', etc. with the suffix *yat* (*aco yat* – Pā III.1.97). It is very clearly noted in the **Mahābhāṣya** and the commentary **Pradīpa** on the same.

> अन्वर्थं खल्वपि निर्वचनं – गुणसंद्रावो द्रव्यमिति ।
>
> Mahābh V.1.119
>
> The etymology of the word *dravya* shows the nature of *dravya* – that which is the *saṃdrāva* (substratum) of attributes is called *dravya*. (*Saṃdrāva* is from the root *dru-* 'to go', with the prefix *sam.*)
> (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

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According to the commentary **Pradīpa** of Kaiyaṭa, *saṃdrāva* means *āśraya* (substratum).

संद्रूयते संगम्यते आश्रीयते इति संद्रावः । ...
गुणानामाश्रयो द्रव्यमित्यर्थः ।

Pradīpa on Mahābh V.1.119

Saṃdrāva is that which is transgressed (*saṃdrūyate*), met together (*saṃgamyate*), and located in (*āśrīyate*). *Dravya* stands for the substratum of attributes (*guṇas*). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

So to the question raised by himself in the commentary on, what is *dravya* and what are →*guṇas*, the clear answer is focussed, which illustrates that the former is different from the latter in its basic concept and properties. It is not a mere aggregate of properties (*guṇasamudāya*) (cf. comm. on Pā IV.1.3). Because *dravya* is the substratum of qualities or properties, it is not destroyed or lost with the destruction of the qualities (cf. Mahābh V.1.119).

This etymology of *dravya* is clearly mentioned in the **Tattvabodhinī** as: (comm. on Pā IV.3.161) '*dravyaguṇakarma*' – *ityādiṣu prayujyamānadravyaśabdastu guṇairdrūyate – āśrīyate iti drudhātoḥ 'aco yat' iti yat pratyayāntaḥ.*

The same word (*dravya*) is derived from the word *dru* 'wood' with the suffix *yat* (by the rule *drośca* – Pā IV.3.161) in the sense of wooden goods. Bhaṭṭoji explained this clearly, as follows:

द्रुर्वृक्षः; तस्य विकारोऽवयवो वा द्रव्यम् ।

Dru means tree, any modification of it or part of it is *dravya.*

The use of *dru* in this sense, i.e. wood or tree (or any article made out of a tree) is amply found in the Vedic texts, e.g.:

उक्थवाहसे विभ्वे मनीषां दृणा न पारमीरया नदीनाम् ।

ṚV VIII.96.11

Send forth thy praise to mighty Indra who is borne by hymns, as (a Sailor sends a traveller) in a ship made of wood across the rivers .... (Tr. H.H. Wilson)

or:

रक्षोहा विश्वचर्षणिरभि योनिमयोहतम् ।
दृणा सधस्थमासदत् ॥

ṚV IX.1.2

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Fiend-queller, friend of all men, he hath with the wood attained unto his place, his iron-fashioned home. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

इन्दुरभि द्रुणा हितो हियानो धाराभिरक्षाः ॥

ṚV IX.98.2cd

Onward hath Indu flowed in streams, impelled, surrounded by the stream. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

आ तू षिञ्च हरिमीं द्रोरुपस्थे वाशीभिस्तक्षताश्मन्मयीभिः ।

ṚV X.101.10ab

Pour golden juice within the wooden vessel: with stonemade axes fashion ye and form it. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

In the sense of worthy *dravya* is also derived from the word *dru*. Here the suffix *yat* is irregularly added to denote comparison or analogy (by the rule *dravyaṃ ca bhavye* – Pā V.3.104). In this case *dravya* would mean something or somebody capable of serving a purpose.

The **Kāśikā** commentary on the above sūtra gives the following explanation:

द्रव्यं भव्यः, आत्मवान् अभिप्रेतानाम् अर्थानां पात्रभूत उच्यते ।

KāVṛ on Pā V.3.104

Dravya means prudent or worthy of receiving desired things.

Hence, if the denotative object is considered to be worthy, then the word *dravya* is derived from the stem *dru* in relation to such connotation, i.e. *bhavye upameye gamye*, as explained by Vāsudevadīkṣita in his commentary **Bālamanoramā** (on Pā V.3.104). The example of the use of the word *dravya* under the same sūtra has been given by Bhaṭṭojidīkṣita as: '*dravyam ayaṃ brāhmaṇaḥ*', keeping the word *dravya* in neuter gender only, though the object of denotation is a masculine word. Perhaps this makes the implication of connotation *upamāna* or supposition (*upameya*) more transparent.

The examples given in the **Kāśikā** are quite enlightening in getting into the primary sense of the word *dravya*:

द्रव्योऽयं राजपुत्रः । द्रव्योऽयं माणवकः ।

KāVṛ on Pā V.3.104

This prince is worthy. This boy is worthy.

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Here, the word *dravya* is used in masculine gender in relation to its denotative object, which is masculine.

But in the **Gaṇaratnamahodadhi** the same context has been illustrated using the word *dravya* in neuter gender only. Of course that does not harm the Sanskrit syntactical system, because *dravya* is the subject in the following sentence and the prince predicate, in which context the anomaly or lack of congruence in respect of gender and number does not harm.

The text of **Gaṇaratnamahodadhi** on the term '*dravya*' is as follows:

दुरिव द्रव्यमयं राजपुत्रः । यथा द्रुमः फलपुष्प-पल्लवादिभिरर्थिनः कृतार्थयति स हि भवनमर्हतीति भव्यो भवति आत्मवानिति द्रव्यमुच्यते । क्रिया हि द्रव्यं विनयति नाद्रव्यमिति । पुरुषार्थसाधकत्वाद् हिरण्यादिकमपि द्रव्यम् ।

Gaṇar III.190

The word *dravya* is derived from the word *dru* (tree, i.e. like a tree) in the sense of 'one who deserves the desired object'. As a tree is capable of bearing fruits and flowers, so one deserving intended objects is called *dravya*. An action (i.e. the act of teaching) can train or guide only a *dravya* and not a non-*dravya*. Gold and the like are also called (*dravya*), for they are means of acquiring human goal. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The word *dravya* is found in the **Amara Kośa** in the list of words meaning wealth involved in the worldly transaction of materials:

द्रव्यं वित्तं स्वापतेयं रिक्थमृक्थं धनं वसु ।
हिरण्यं द्रविणं द्युम्नमर्थरैविभवा अपि ॥

AmKo II.9.90

The word *dravya*, *vitta*, *svāpateya*, *riktha*, *ṛktha*, *dhana*, *vasu*, *hiraṇya*, *draviṇa*, *dyumna*, *artha*, *rai* and *vibhava* also – (these thirteen are the words in the group of *dravya*).

The term '*dravya*' is recorded in the **Haima Kośa** as the synonym of the following words.

द्रव्यं भव्ये धने क्ष्मादौ जतुद्रुमविकारयोः ।
विनये भेषजे रीत्याम् ... ॥

HaiKo II.368–369

Dravya can also mean worthy (*bhavya*), wealth (*dhana*), earth,

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(*kṣmā*) etc., lac (*jatu*), made of wood, i.e. wooden goods (*drumavikāra*), education or training (*vinaya*), medicine (*bheṣaja*) and style (*rīti*).

The lexicon of Amara takes up the word *dravya* once again in the list of miscellaneous words *nānārthavarga* and records the twofold aspect in the comprehension of the word:

द्रव्यं भव्ये गुणाश्रये ।

AmKo III.3.154

The term *dravya* denotes worthy (*bhavya*) and substratum of qualities (*guṇāśraya*).

The **Viśva Kośa** quoted by Bhānujidīkṣita in the explanation of this passage is quite similar to that of Haima quoted above. The difference is only the **Viśva Kośa** records the use of the word *dravya* also in the sense of alloy metals, *pittala* and pastes or colours, *vilepa* (ViśKo CXVII.34–35).

The **Vaijayantī Kośa** reflects almost verbatim the wording of **Amara Kośa** (III.3.154) when it defines *dravya* as:

द्रव्यं गुणानामाधारे ।

VaiKo VI.3.15

Dravya means *ādhāra*, the substratum in which *guṇa*s (qualities) abide. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Although it is commonly thought that the words *dravya* and *vastu* mean 'a thing' or 'material' and hence they are synonymous, yet it is to be noted that these do not have exactly the same meaning. In general →*vastu* means 'thing' or 'goods' as in the use of the famous proverb: *alpānāmapi vastūnāṃ saṃhatiḥ kāryasādhikā* – which means 'the solidarity or unity of even small things is capable of performing a great deed'. In such case the word *vastu* is synonymous to *dravya*, it might be replaced by this word too. But when *vastu* means 'subject-matter' 'concept', it cannot be replaced by the word *dravya*, e.g. in benedictory verses with salutation or with the indication about the subject-mater:

आशीर्नमस्क्रिया वस्तुनिर्देशो वापि तन्मुखम् ॥

Kāvyād I.14cd

That (*mahākāvya*) should open either with benediction or obeisance (to the deities) or indication of the concept (conveyed through the composition). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

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In this case the word *vastu* cannot be replaced by *dravya.*

In the philosophical texts the words *nitya-vastu* and *anitya-vastu* of Vedānta concept, which mean the Eternal Brahman and the non-eternal rest, cannot be replaced by *nitya-dravya* and *anitya-dravya*, which are again very basic concepts of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika thought denoting the eternal and non-eternal aspect of the substances (as earth, water, etc.).

The word →*artha* though originally understood in the group of words meaning 'material', 'wealth' or 'money'; later on meant 'goal' or 'purpose', e.g.:

कोऽर्थः पुत्रेण जातेन, यो न विद्वान् न बुद्धिमान् ॥

Pañc I.5cd

What is the use of having a son born, who is neither learned nor intelligent?

The word *artha*, which later on primarily meant 'money' or 'meaning' was recorded from early times as cognate or synonymous to *dravya.* So *dravya* does mean 'money', but not 'meaning' or 'significance' (e.g. of word or sentence), which is communicated by the word '*artha*'.

Layers of Meaning

The word *dravya* signifies different material and non-material things in different branches of learning or *śāstra.* Hence the spectrum of the meaning of this particular word ranges from ordinary materials of physical perception to absolutely abstract conceptions.

The Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system of philosophy explains the world and beyond in terms of primary categories or *padārthas*, of which *dravya* is the first one. *Dravya* or substance as such is again divided into nine varieties, i.e. *pṛthivī, ap, tejas, vāyu, ākāśa, kāla, dik, ātman* and *manas*– the earth, water, fire, air, space, time, directions, selves and mind repectively. From this enumeration it is quite clear that the theories regarding the nature and concept of *dravya* or substance has both the material and the non-material aspects. Just as physically visible or perceivable things like earth, water, etc. comprise or are parts of *dravya*, the non-material or at least not directly perceivable concepts like *ākāśa* or *kāla* are also *dravya.* Again in this theory the physically perceivable things have some eternal aspect and some non-eternal aspect as well, just as they have physical forms, as stones, clay or wood or flowing water, etc. and at the same time the same are existing in the feelings or in the capacity of feeling or the sense

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organs. The molecules or *paramāṇus* of these physically perceivable things are not object of perception.

The different layers of significance of the term *dravya* and its potential of signifying both physical and metaphysical or the visible and the invisible have its very special impact in the sphere of art be it rites or ritual, literary creation, painting, sculpture, temple architecture or house building, etc.

Development of the Concept

The word *draviṇa* meaning wealth or power, which is a parallel word to *dravya* is found in the **Ṛgveda**:

अहं सोममाहनसं बिभर्म्यहं त्वष्टारमुत पूषणं भगम् ।
अहं दधामि द्रविणं हविष्मते सुप्राव्ये यजमानाय सुन्वते ॥

ṚV X.125.2

I uphold Soma the exuberant; I uphold Tvaṣṭā, Pūṣan and Bhaga. I pour wealth (*dravya*) on the offerer of oblation, the worshipper and the pious presser of soma. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Here the context is the power and magnanimity of → *Vāc*, the word or speech at all. She is speaking about herself in the above quoted *mantra*.

For the **Sāmaveda** and its reader the *mantra*s of the **Ṛgveda** are *dravya*. So the *sāma* – chanting considers the *ṛk* verses to be the base or *dravya* for *sāma* tune or musical notes.

द्रव्यशब्दश्छन्दोगैर्ऋक्षुआचरितः ।

MīmSūBh VII.2.14

The Sāmavedins use the term '*dravya*' in the sense of verse. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

In the Vedic ritual the materials of offering are called *dravya*s. Hence the **Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra** records that the ritual comprises of three main aspects, viz. 1) material of which the oblations are offered in the sacred fires, 2) the deity to whom the oblations are offered and 3) the particular mode of offering the oblation:

द्रव्यं देवता त्यागः ॥

KātŚrSū I.2.2

The offering material (of which the oblations are made), the deity

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and the act of giving away (the oblation to the deity) (are the three main aspects of a sacrifice). (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

Though all these aspects differ from one ritual to another, basically the rituals need these three things.

This sūtra has been interpreted by Vidyādhara Śarmā in his Saralāvṛtti as:

... देवतोद्देशेन द्रव्यत्यागरूपस्य यागपदार्थस्य पूर्वाचार्यैर्निरूपणात् ।

SarVṛ on KātŚrSū I.2.2

... Since the earlier teachers have interpreted the word *yāga* as offering of (sacrificial) materials (*dravya*) to deities.

It may further be noted that materials of offering of oblations could be of five kinds – corn, milk, animal, soma and clarified butter.

Again in the Vājapeya yajña (ritual) gifts are always given in numbering seventeen. Either there may be seventeen different types of gifts (cows, elephants, cloth, etc.) each numbering seventeen or seventeen hundred or there may be only one type but numbering should be in seventeen (17 cows or 17 elephants and so on). This is recorded in the **Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra**:

द्रव्येषु वा सप्तदशता ॥

सप्तदश सप्तदशानि ददातीति श्रुतेः ।

KātŚrSūBh (Karka Bhāṣya) XIV.2.31

Or, he (the sacrificer) may obtain the number seventeen inside a particular type itself giving away seventeen articles (*dravya*) of the same type, since the *śruti* enjoins that he gives seventeen and seventeen. (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

Thus in the context of performing a rite *dravya* means the materials of offering. But it is to be noted that here *dravya* and *artha* bear totally different meaning, the latter communicating the purpose or target of the former. Hence we come across expressions where both words are used side by side as contrastive to each other:

अर्थद्रव्यविरोधेऽर्थसामान्यं तत्परत्वात् ॥ गुणद्रव्ययोर्द्रव्यं प्रधानयोगात् ॥

KātŚrSū I.4.16–17

When there is a conflict between the prescribed material (*dravya*) and the purpose (*artha*) that is to be achieved, one should choose a

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substitute material with which the common purpose can be fulfilled because the former is meant for the accomplishment of the latter. And when there is a conflict between the material (*dravya*) and its quality, importance is to be given to the material (*dravya*) and not to its purpose, because the former is directly connected with the main rite. (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

It may be noted here that the context is the general rule of selecting sacrificial materials. Due to some defects of the material if a conflict arises between the prescribed material and purpose to be achieved, one has to choose the prescribed substitute material from which the same purpose is fulfilled. Material is the cause of fulfilment of all purposes; hence the proper material is important. Again, if a conflict arises between the material and its quality (→*guṇa*) then importance should be given to the material and not to its quality. Hence, because of the defects in the material, one cannot abandon the prescribed material. So the selection of the *dravya* is to be made in view of the *artha.*

Again, in the context of erecting or constructing the sacrificial post (→*yūpaḥ*) while explaining the selection of tree or wood the word *dravya* is used to denote duramen. In order to describe the preferable material of sacrificial post, the **Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa** describes various species of trees in the *Agniṣomīya paśuyāga* section:

यूप्य एको द्रव्य एको गर्त्य एको योऽवाचीनवकलः स गर्त्यस्तस्यासान्येयादथ य ऊर्ध्ववकलो द्रव्यः स मानुषः ... ॥

ŚāṅkhBr X.2

Some species (of tree) are fit for sacrificial post, some are rich in duramen (*dravya*), while others are useful for (digging) holes. Those having bark-system flowing down-wards are fit for (digging) holes. He (the scarificer) should not prefer this species, but those that have bark-system facing upwards and which are full of duramen (*dravya*) are related to human being. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

In the **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra** on the other hand, *dravya* ultimately means not only things of oblations like barley, grains, rice oblation, or fire or utensils and instruments used for performing rituals but it also means →*devatā* (I.4.14), *svarga* (VI.1.1), i.e. one of the target achievements of performing a sacrificial rite, and also animals (X.3.39). So here the deity to whom the offering is made, the goal of the offering and the object offered all are *dravya* in the concept.

Dravya is usually defined by the Mīmāṃsakas as *pariṇāmavat*, i.e. possessing dimension or magnitude.

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Thus the concept or experience of Naciketas for attaining something eternal through things and offerings which are non-eternal is revealed in the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad.** The experience of Naciketas is of uplifting the sacrificial offering and promoting the existence to the eternal status:

> जानाम्यहं शेवधिरित्यनित्यं न ह्यध्रुवैः प्राप्यते हि ध्रुवं तत् ।
> ततो मया नाचिकेतश्चितोऽग्निरनित्यैर्द्रव्यैः प्राप्तवानस्मि नित्यम् ॥
>
> KaṭhUp II.10
>
> I know what is known as treasure is something inconstant.
> For truly, that which is steadfast is not obtained by those who are unsteadfast.
>
> Therefore the Naciketas-fire has been built by me,
> And with means which are inconstant
> I have obtained that which is constant. (Tr R.E. Hume)

Here the sacrificial things and sacrificial material, and the eternal self are denoted by the term *dravya.* The development of this concept is found in an elaborate form in the **Śāṅkara Bhāṣya,** (on BrSū) in the idiom *nityānityavastuviveka*, i.e. the sense of discrimination between the things of eternity and non-eternity, i.e. between the Self or Highest Self, (→*Ātman*) and the non-self, (*anātman*).

Again, in the context of rituals and their performance the word *dravya* also means action (*kriyā*) and purpose (*prayojana*). As before, *dravya* in such contexts means materials or substances which are useful in the performance of rites:

> ... तत्रापि द्रव्यसंस्कारकर्मसु परार्थत्वात् फलश्रुतिरर्थवादः स्यात् – इत्यर्थवादतां वक्ष्यति ।
>
> MīmSūBh I.1.1.
>
> ... in regard to the acts tending to the preparation of substance the declaration of results should be taken as *arthavāda*, being meant as they are to be subservient to the other purpose, i.e. the purpose of (performing) the sacrifice. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

And also the following passage of **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra Bhāṣya** emphasises that the *dravya* plays main role in any ritual and this is clearly explained how and in what way the *dravya* is used.

> ... द्रव्यं क्रियार्थम् । यदि प्रयोजनवती क्रिया । व्यक्तं सा द्रव्येण निर्वर्तयितव्या । तस्याः निर्वृत्तिर्द्रव्याद् ऋते न भवतीति तन्निर्वृत्तये

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द्रव्यमेषितव्यं भवति । तस्मात् क्रियार्थं द्रव्यम् ... ।

MīmSūBh III.1.3

The substance serves the purpose of the Act; if the Act is to be done for a purpose, it must be accomplished by means of a substance – no act can be accomplished without a substance – therefore, for the accomplishment of the Act, a substance has to be found out – thus substance serves the purpose of an Act. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

That *dravya* or substance is the most important factor in the performing of a sacrificial rite is evident from the direct statement of the **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra Bhāṣya** where *dravya* or substance has been made identical with the sacrificial fire:

द्रव्यं वा अग्निशब्देन उच्यते । कतमद् द्रव्यम् ?
यदेतद् ज्वलनः । अत्र हि एष प्रसिद्धः ।

MīmSūBh II.3.22

In reality, it is the substance (*dravya*) that is spoken of by the word *agni* – what is that substance (*dravya*)? It is the burning substance, fire, that is spoken of in fact, this is the well-known meaning of the word *agni*. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

Because without a substance for burning, the inflamation or fire is not possible, hence the identification. It may be recalled that in the later stage, in the philosophical system of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika fire or *tejas* is one of the nine *dravya*s or substances. So, when Naciketas says that he acquires the Eternal Self, which is also luminous and conscious (→*cit*, →*jñāna*) through the noneternal sacrificial substances, he does not exclude the sacrificial fire. The eternal and endless fire of Self is superseding the sacrificial one – this divine journey contains the basic significance of the story of Naciketas.

The same word, i.e. *dravya* stands for property in another context of the same text:

एवं वा द्रव्यार्जनम् उदाहरणम् । इह द्रव्यार्जनं तैस्तैर्नियमैः श्रूयते ।
ब्राह्मणस्य प्रतिग्रहादिना, राजन्यस्य जयादिना, वैश्यस्य कृष्यादिना ।

MīmSūBh IV.1.2

The acquiring of property (*dravya*) is the subject-matter of this Adhikaraṇa. Several modes of acquiring wealth are found to have been enjoined. For the Brāhmaṇa by means of receiving gifts, for the Kṣatriya by means of conquest and the like, and for the Vaiśya by means of agriculture and the rest.... (Tr. G.N. Jha)

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Again in case of the later rituals of the Agamic texts, *dravya* chiefly denotes the *homadravya*s, i.e. objects to be offered into the sacrificial fire:

समिदाज्यचरून् लाजान् सर्षपांश्च यवास्तिलान् ॥
सक्तुं च बिल्बपत्रं च कदलीफलमेव च ।
कन्दमूलं च इत्येते द्रव्यास्त्वेकादश स्मृताः ॥

RauĀ XVIII.80cd–81

Eleven objects are known to be offered into the sacrificial fire. They are firewood, clarified butter, boiled rice, fried rice, mustard, barley, sesamum seeds, fried barley powder (*saktu*), leaves of Bilva tree, banana fruit, the root of bulbous plant (*kandamūla*).
(Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

In the context of such rituals involving offering of some objects into the fire, the materials such as the sacrificial ladles etc. are also called *dravya*, which are to be purified when they become impure. So the expression *dravyaśuddhi* in the **Mṛgendra Āgama** (Kp VI.32) means 'the purification of the material (of the ritual)'.

The **Bṛhat Saṃhitā**, the encyclopaedic work on technical sciences, declares that the substances (*dravya*) have the different zodiacal signs as particular rulers on them. In other words in the context of price of commodities and fluctuation in the same, the different substances are alloted to the different zodiacal signs.

ये येषां द्रव्याणामधिपतयो राशयः समुद्दिष्टाः ।
मुनिभिः शुभाशुभार्थं तानागमतः प्रवक्ष्यामि ॥

BṛSam XLI.1

I (Varāhamihira) shall now expound, on the authority of the *śāstra*s, the different zodiacal signs that have been declared by ancient sages (like Kāśyapa) as the rulers of different substances (*dravya*), so that their good and bad effects (on prices etc.) may be understood.
(Tr. M.R. Bhat)

At several places the word *dravya* used in the **Bṛhat Saṃhitā** means wealth (cf. LXXIX.36; LXXXVII.1, 5). In the sense of any type of object or article or even food also the word *dravya* is commonly used (cf. *ibid.* LXXXV.5; LXXXVI.69; XCV.15). This type of the application of the word *dravya* is quite parallel to the sense in which the **Manu Smṛti** applied it.

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Epic, Purāṇa and Dharmaśāstras

The word *dravya* has been used in the Epics, Purāṇas and also in the Dharmaśāstras denoting material objects of worldly use and consumption such as wealth, treasure, money, goods, food, materials like flesh of black antelope, materials needed for *homa*, a thing which causes and heals a disease, any object of perception, the physical body and so on. In the following verses *dravya* means wealth:

महानतिक्रमो ह्येष तक्षकस्य दुरात्मनः ।
द्विजस्य योऽददद् द्रव्यं मा नृपं जीवयेदिति ॥

MBh I.46.40

The act of aggression is great on the part of the wretch Takṣaka who gave wealth (*dravya*) unto that Brāhmaṇa in order that he might not revive the king. (Tr. K.M. Ganguli)

तस्मिन्नृपतिशार्दूले स्वर्यातेऽथ कदाचन ।
बभूव तत्कुलेयानां द्रव्यकार्यमुपस्थितम् ॥

MBh I.169.13

After that monarch had ascended to heaven, an occasion came when his descendant were in want of wealth (*dravya*).

Dravya is used in the sense of food:

विषघ्नैरगदैश्चास्य सर्वद्रव्याणि योजयेत् ।
विषघ्नानि च रत्नानि नियतो धारयेत् सदा ॥

Manu VII.218

Let him mix all his food (*dravya*) with medicines (that are) antidotes against poison, and let him always be careful to wear gems which destroy poison. (Tr. G. Bühler)

Dravya also denotes goods and articles:

द्रव्याणि हिंसाद्यो यस्य ज्ञानतोऽज्ञानतोऽपि वा ।
स तस्योत्पादयेत्तुष्टिं राज्ञे दद्याच्च तत्समम् ॥

Manu VIII.288

He who damages the goods (*dravyāṇi*) of another, be it intentionally or unintentionally, shall give satisfaction to the (owner) and pay to the king a fine equal to the (damage). (Tr. G. Bühler)

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यस्त्वेतान्युपकृष्टानि द्रव्याणि स्तेनयेन्नरः ।
तमाद्यं दण्डयेद्राजा यश्चाग्निं चोरयेद्गृहात् ॥

Manu VIII.333

On that man who may steal (any of) the above mentioned articles (*dravyāṇi*), when they are prepared for (use), let the king inflict the first (or lowest) amercement; likewise on him who may steal (a sacred) fire out of the room (in which it is kept). (Tr. G. Bühler)

अमावास्याऽष्टका वृद्धिः कृष्णपक्षोऽयनद्वयम् ।
द्रव्यं ब्राह्मणसम्पत्तिर्विषुवत् सूर्यसंक्रमः ॥

YājSm I.217

The new moon's day, the *aṣṭakā*, the *vṛddhi*, the dark fortnight, the two solstices, getting (the particularly suitable) materials (*dravya*) and the worthy Brāhmaṇas, the (two) equinoxes, and the passage of the sun (from one sign of the zodiac to another). ....
(Tr. S.C. Vidyarnava)

In the **Bhagavad-Gītā** the word *dravya* refers to wealth; as in:

द्रव्ययज्ञास्तपोयज्ञा योगयज्ञास्तथाऽपरे ।
स्वाध्यायज्ञानयज्ञाश्च यतयः संशितव्रताः ॥

BhG IV.28

Some offer up their wealth (*dravya*), some their hard penances, some spiritual exercise (*yoga*), and some again make study and knowledge of scripture their sacrifice, – religious men whose vows are strict. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

And again:

श्रेयान् द्रव्यमयाद्यज्ञाज्ज्ञानयज्ञः परंतप ।
सर्वं कर्माखिलं पार्थ ज्ञाने परिसमाप्यते ॥

BhG IV.33

Better than the sacrifice of wealth (*dravya*) is the sacrifice of wisdom. All works without exception in wisdom find their consummation, O Pārtha (Arjuna). (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

The **Agni Purāṇa** records the material of any structure as *dravya*:

यद्द्रव्या शिविका चेयं तद्द्रव्यो भूतसंग्रहः ।

AgPur CCCLXXX.18ab

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The material (*dravya*) with which the palanquin is made, is the substance (*dravya*) of other beings. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

एवं विनाशिभिर्द्रव्यैः समिदाज्यकुशादिभिः ।
निष्पाद्यते क्रिया या तु सा भवित्री विनाशिनी ॥

ViPur II.14.23

Any act that is performed by such perishable things (*dravya*) as fuel, clarified butter, the *kuśa* grass, etc., must be perishable.
(Tr. H.H. Wilson)

गृहान्ता द्रव्यसंघाता द्रव्यान्ताश्च तथा मतिः ।

ViPur VI.1.20ab

(In the description of *Kaliyuga*) accumulated treasures (*dravya*) will be expended on (ostentatious) dwellings. The minds of men will be wholly occupied in acquiring wealth (*dravya*). (Tr. H.H. Wilson)

In the **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** *dravya* denotes the vital power of all organs of the body and the first essence as in the following verses:

आमयो यश्च भूतानां जायते येन सुव्रत ।
तदेव ह्यामयं द्रव्यं च पुनाति चिकित्सितम् ॥

BhāgPur I.5.33

O good soul, does not a thing applied therapeutically, cure a disease which was caused by that very thing (*dravya*).
(Tr. B.S. Prabhupada)

And again:

द्रव्योपलब्धिस्थानस्य द्रव्येक्षाऽयोग्यता यदा ।
तत्पञ्चत्वमहंमानादुत्पत्तिर्द्रव्यदर्शनम् ॥
यथाऽक्ष्णोर्द्रव्यावयवदर्शनायोग्यता यदा ।
तदैव चक्षुषो द्रष्टुर्द्रष्टृत्वायोग्यताऽनयोः ॥

BhāgPur III.31.45–46

When the eyes lose their power to see colour or form due to morbid affliction of the optic nerve, the sense of sight becomes deadened. The living entity, who is the seer of both the eyes and the sight, loses his power of vision. In the same way, when the physical body, the place where perception of objects occurs, is rendered incapable of perceiving, that is known as death. When one begins to view the physical body as one's very self that is called birth.
(Tr. B.S. Prabhupada)

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Grammar

In the grammatical context the word *dravya* has been used to imply 'individual' in contrast to the expression →*ākṛti* implying genus. This contrastive feature of these two related words becomes prominent in the treatise of Patañjali. In the introductory part of his great commentary – the **Mahābhāṣya**, Patañjali raises the debate whether the individual or the genus is denoted by a word:

किं पुनराकृतिः पदार्थ आहोस्विद् द्रव्यम् ? उभयमित्याह ।

Mahābh I.1

Does a word denote a genus or an individual? Both, says the grammarian. (Tr. K.C. Chatterjee)

Further:

आकृतिर्हि नित्या, द्रव्यमनित्यम् । ... द्रव्यं हि नित्यमाकृतिरनित्या ।

Mahābh I.1

For genus is eternal, whereas individuals are transitory .... for *dravya* or individual is eternal, form or shape non-eternal.
(Tr. K.C. Chatterjee)

Patañjali puts forth many intricate situations regarding the conflict of determining the word-meaning – should it be the individual (*vyakti*), i.e. *dravya* or should it be the genus (*jāti*), i.e. *ākṛti*. He quotes the Dharmaśāstras and refers to the prohibition of killing a brahmin and drinking liquor – *brāhmaṇa na hantavyaḥ, surā na peyā*. Here the genus is to be understood, not an individual, – no brahmin should be killed, not any liquor should be drunk, but elsewhere such acts would take place at will.

Such is the explanation of Patañjali.

धर्मशास्त्रं च तथा ॥

एवं च कृत्वा धर्मशास्त्रं प्रवृत्तं, 'ब्राह्मणो न हन्तव्यः', 'सुरा न पेयेति', ब्राह्मणमात्रं न हन्यते, सुरामात्रं न पीयते । यदि द्रव्यं पदार्थः स्यादेकं ब्राह्मणमहत्वैकां च सुरामपीत्वान्यत्र कामचारः स्यात् ।

Mahābh I.2.64 (39)

Similarly (it is noted) in the Dharmaśāstra. In the same manner, the Dharmaśāstra enjoins, "*brāhmaṇo na hantavyaḥ*" or "*surā na peyā*", i.e. a brahmin should not be killed and liquor should not be consumed. In case '*dravya*' (individual) would have been meant, barring the particular cases (of an individual brahmin or a particular type of liquor), there would have been licence in all other cases.

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He further explains it saying again that *ākṛti* or genus in contrast to *dravya* or individual is taken as the denotative meaning of a word, the understanding of words and sentences would be disturbed. What would be understood if it is said 'a dog is dead' *śvā mṛtaḥ*? Should it mean all the dogs are dead, no dogs are to be seen in this world? Or, if somebody says 'a cow is born', *gaur jātaḥ*, then is it to mean all cows are born; in other words through the visual perception of one cow all cows are visible? But neither of these really happen to be true.

To resolve such semantic and syntactic problems at the conceptual level Patañjali sums up the whole discourse in the method of synthesis, which he hinted upon previously.

With a similar tone he emphatically remarks in the commentary (Pā I.2.64) in the following manner:

न ह्याकृतिपदार्थिकस्य द्रव्यं न पदार्थः, द्रव्यपदार्थिकस्य
वा आकृतिर्न पदार्थः । उभयोरुभयं पदार्थः ।
कस्यचित्तु किंचित्प्रधानभूतं किंचिद् गुणभूतम् ।
आकृतिपदार्थिकस्य आकृतिः प्रधानभूता, द्रव्यं गुणभूतम् ।
द्रव्यपदार्थिकस्य द्रव्यं प्रधानभूतम् आकृतिः गुणभूता ।

Mahābh I.2.64

It is wrong to think that *dravya* (individual) is not regarded as the sense of word by a person who holds that *ākṛti* (genus) is the sense of the word. Similarly it is wrong to think that genus is not regarded as the sense of word by a person who holds that individual is the sense of the word. Both these senses are accepted by both persons. According to some one sense is primary or chief (*pradhānabhūta*) while the other is subordinate or secondary (*guṇībhūta*). According to a person who holds that the sense of word is genus, genus is the chief and individual is the subordinate sense; according to a person who holds that the sense of a word is individual, individual is the chief and genus is the subordinate sense. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Patañjali thus points out that there is no real conflict or contradiction between *dravya* and *ākṛti*; the difference between is rather of the type of the grade or relative emphasis on one or the other. Virtually there is no real difference between the two:

अव्यतिरेकाद् द्रव्याकृत्योः ।

Mahābh II.1.51

There is no real difference between a substance (*dravya*) and its genus. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

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Regarding the basic nature or essence of *dravya*, in other words, regarding what makes *dravya* identified as *dravya*, the remarks of Patañjali open the gateway of both visual observation and conceptual abstraction. The following extracts from the **Mahābhāṣya** illuminate the reality of the features of *dravya*:

द्रव्यप्रधानं नाम ।

Mahābh V.3.66

The sense of *dravya* (accomplished form) is predominant in inflected words. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

क्रिया चैव हि भाव्यते स्वभावसिद्धं तु द्रव्यम् ।

Mahābh I.3.1

It is the action which is produced, while a substance is accomplished by its own nature. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

A further annotation to the translation adds: Even in such sentences as 'he makes or made or will make a jar (*ghaṭa*)', the stem *ghaṭa* expresses jar as an accomplished entity (*siddharūpa*). The words other than the stem show changes in the substance.

So the nature of a substance at the conceptual level is important. That is the very basis of *dravya*:

यस्य गुणान्तरेष्वपि प्रादुर्भवत्सु, तत्त्वं न विहन्यते तद् द्रव्यम् ।

Mahābh V.1.119

A substance (*dravya*) is that the essence (*tattva*) of which does not get destroyed even if there arise different qualities in it.
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The inter-relation between susbtance, quality and action, i.e. *dravya*, *guṇa*, *kriyā*, has been touched upon by Patañjali in different instances, e.g.:

क्रियायाः क्रिया निवर्तिका भवति, द्रव्यं द्रव्यस्य निवर्तकम् ।

Mahābh I.3.1

It is an action that can resist (or stop) another action. Similarly a substance can resist (or stop) another substance.
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

कृदभिहितो भावो द्रव्यवद् भवति ।

Mahābh II.2.19

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Action denoted by *kṛt* (primary) suffix becomes a substance as it were. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The verbal form has its emphasis on the action itself, but the verbal noun formed through the *kṛt* suffix assumes the character of a substantive, in this form the accomplished nature or the action-concept is more important.

Now, the question arises regarding the relation of *dravya* and →*guṇa*. According to the **Mahābhāṣya** (V.1.119) the former is the substratum of the latter.

This eternal aspect of *dravya* or substance is illustrated in the **Vākyapadīya** as well, where the term is declared to be synonymous or associated with other words meaning eternal concepts, viz.:

आत्मा वस्तु स्वभावश्च शरीरं तत्त्वमित्यपि ।
द्रव्यमित्यस्य पर्यायास्तच्च नित्यमिति स्मृतम् ॥

Vāk III.2.1

The Self, the thing-in-itself, Being, the body (primordial matter), the elements, these are synonyms of the word *dravya* (substance) and it has been declared to be eternal. (Tr. K.A.S. Iyer)

This aspect has been illustrated by Patañjali in a passage, while explaining in one view point the form or class – notion (→*ākṛti*) as non-eternal and the substance as eternal. The forms may be all different, but the substance remains the same, e.g. when a necklace or a bracelet is made from a lump of gold, these can again be changed to other forms. But the substance, i.e. gold remains the same. With the demolition of the form the substance remains the same. Again the forms can all be destroyed and brought back to lump of gold:

आकृतिरन्या चान्या च भवति । द्रव्यं पुनस्तदेव ।
आकृत्युपमर्देन द्रव्यमेवावशिष्यते ।

Mahābh I (7)

The shape (*ākṛti*) may be of different types (at different times). But the (actual) substance remains all the same. Even after the modification of forms, it is the substance which remains unchanged. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Āyurveda

In the texts on medicine *dravya* primarily means the herbs which are used to produce medicine, i.e. *oṣadhi*s.

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... द्रव्याणि पुनरोषधयः ।

SuSam SūSthā I.28

Substances which are called the *oṣadhi*s. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Here *dravya* has been translated by the experts as vegetable substance, in other words *oṣadhi*s maintaining the conceptual line in the context of the science of medicine. These herbs are of five hundered and seventy-three types:

शतं च पञ्च द्रव्याणां त्रिसप्तत्यधिकोत्तरम् ।

SuSam Uttaratantra LXVI.8

The elementary substances (*dravya*) are five hundred and seventy-three. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Of course, the context cannot be ignored. Therefore the basic substances, i.e. *oṣadhi*s are 573 in number for a scientist of medicine.

Otherwise while giving definition of *dravya* the medicinal texts rather conform to the definitions given by the Nyāya philosophy.

द्रव्यलक्षणं तु 'क्रियागुणवत् समवायिकारणम्' ।

SuSam SūSthā XL.3

Substance or drug necessarily implies action and attributes with which it is intimately connected and of which it is the primary cause, or to put it more explicitly, these attributes have an inseparable inherence in and are intimately associated with the substance by way of cause and effect (*samavāyikāraṇam*). (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Elsewhere also (*ibid.* I.51) similar definition has been given. So it is marked that *dravya* is the primary cause of further products, viz. in medicine it is the herbs or drug. The commentator Cakrapāṇidatta has also explained it as under:

द्रव्यमिति आधारकारणम् । द्रव्यशब्दो ह्याधारकारणवाची ।

Comm. on CarSam SūSthā I.64

Dravya means basic cause. Here the word *dravya* denotes basic cause. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

In the enumeration of the terms worth-knowing for acquaintance with the course of discussion among physicians *dravya* is one:

महर्षयस्ते ददृशुर्यथावज्ज्ञानचक्षुषा ।
सामान्यं च विशेषं च गुणान् द्रव्याणि कर्म च ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.28

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The great sages further grasped properly the knowledge of *sāmānya* (similarity), *viśeṣa* (dissimilarity), *guṇa* (properties), *dravya* (substance), *karma* (action). (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

इमानि तु खलु पदानि भिषग्वादमार्ग ज्ञानार्थमधिगम्यानि भवन्ति; तद्यथा – वादः, द्रव्यं, गुणाः, कर्म, सामान्यम् ... ।

CarSam ViSthā VIII.27

The terms are worth-knowing for acquaintance of the course of discussion among physicians such as – *vāda, dravya, guṇa, karma, sāmānya*, ... (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

The Philosophic Schools: Darśana

In the commentary on the **Yoga-Sūtra** of Patañjali, Vyāsa explains that *dravya* is a collection, it is an integrated form. The separate existence of the individual components of it does not make the object. In this context *dravya* means objects of realisation and substance as well, in the following verse:

अयुतसिद्धावयवभेदानुगतः समूहो द्रव्यमिति पतञ्जलिः ।

YSūBh III.44

Patañjali says that an object is a collection, the different component parts of which do not exist separately. (Tr. H. Aranya)

And also:

सामान्यविशेषसमुदायोऽत्र द्रव्यम् ।

YSūBh III.44

Here (according to Sāṃkhya philosophy) a substance is an aggregate of generic and specific attributes. (Tr. H. Aranya)

To signify objects of experience Patañjali uses the word *vastu* as well. However, a problem arises as to how to ascertain the existence and creation of the objects of vision in dream. The source of different objects is different mind-stuff. This has been answered by Patañjali, as follows:

बहुचित्तालम्बनीभूतमेकं वस्तु साधारणं, तत्खलु
नैकचित्तपरिकल्पितं, नाप्यनेकचित्तपरिकल्पितं किंतु
स्वप्रतिष्ठम् । कथम् ? वस्तु साम्ये चित्तभेदात् ।

YSūBh IV.15

A single (physical) thing is the common (physical) basis for many

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mind-stuffs. It is not of course, figured forth by a single mind-stuff, nor yet is it figured forth by many mind-stuffs. It is rather grounded in itself. Why is this? Because, while the (physical) thing remains the same, the mind-stuffs are different. (Tr. J.H. Woods)

The ontological discussion on the nature and definition of *dravya* reached its most extensive form in the Vaiśeṣika system:

पृथिव्यापस्तेजोवायुराकाशं कालो दिगात्मा मन इति द्रव्याणि ॥

VaiśSū I.1.5

Substances (*dravya*) are the following: earth, water, fire, air, *ākāśa* (space, sound-producing element), time, direction, self and mind. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

It should be clearly noted that these entities are to be known according to the śāstric view point. In other words the epistemological structure and its technical terms are to be kept in mind. The common view about time and direction is not at all to be maintained in the field of direction (*diś*) and time (→*kāla*). A *dravya* is regarded as the *samavāyikāraṇa*, material cause. A *dravya* produces qualities (*guṇa*) and action (*karman*):

द्रव्याणि द्रव्यान्तरम् आरभन्ते ... ॥

VaiśSū I.1.10

Substances produce such substances as belonging to their own *jāti* (species). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Here *dravya* means *sajātīya dravya* (cf. VaiśSū I.1.9) – having generic attribute of the same character.

न द्रव्यं कार्यं कारणं वा बधति ॥

VaiśSū I.1.12

A substance is not destroyed either by its effect or by its cause. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

It is to be noted that a substance is destroyed either by the destruction of its substratum or by the destruction of the originative conjunction. But what is this substance or *dravya*?

क्रियागुणवत् समवायिकारणमिति द्रव्यलक्षणम् ॥

VaiśSū I.1.15

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That ontological category (*padārtha*) is called substance (*dravya*) in which inhere action and quality and which is the inherent cause (of action, quality and of those substances that are created). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Again in another view point it is said that a substance is the effect of many conjunctions:

संयोगानां द्रव्यम् ॥

VaiśSū I.1.27

A substance is the effect of many conjunctions.
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

This view is almost parallel to the view of Yoga philosophy referred to above (YSūBh III.44).

The commentary on **Nyāya-Sūtra** only points out that *dravya* is different from →*guṇa*.

गुणव्यतिरिक्तं च द्रव्यम् ।

NySūBh IV.1.35

Substance is something different from its qualities. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

The remarks of Wilhelm Halbfass on how the category *dravya* has been introduced and defined are quite relevant: "About the manner in which the Vaiśeṣika texts introduce and explain the topic of the term substance the following point is to be noted first. No general or functional feature or definition of *dravya* is given; it is not questioned at all as to what is actually substance and what are the basic implications of its terminology. Instead of this comprehensive list of all the entities which fall under such term, – the well-known list of nine *dravya*s – earth, water, fire, air, ether, space, time, self and internal organ – is put forward, and along with that some more or less common attributes of the entities mentioned in this list is also added in an absolutely casual manner ... The entities summed up as substances, rather classes of entitites form in some aspect a heterogenous group ..." (translated from German by Ratna Basu: "Zum Begriff der Substanz (*dravya*) im Vaiśeṣika", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde südasiens und Archiv für indische Philosophie*, Bd. XX (1970), p. 14).

It is true that the cosmological orientation of ancient Vaiśeṣika determines its access to the problem of substance. The exposition of this problem proceeds not from a definition of substance, but from an enumeration of substances. It is also to be kept in mind that the Vaiśeṣika doctrine of categories is neither

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rooted in, nor guided by explicit grammatical reflection. Hence the terms are established as technical terms with specific implication for this particular system of thought.

Again the division of the category *dravya* into eternal (*nitya*) and noneternal (*anitya*) substances is most relevant. All nine substances are essentially irreducible, indestructible constituents of the world. Among them "the elemental substances, i.e. earth, water, fire and air occur not only in their eternal irreducible form as atoms (*aṇu, paramāṇu*), but also as destructible compounds of such atoms, as concrete empirical objects of our daily practical acquaintance... The noneternal substances are not theoretically irreducible cosmic substrates, but things with which we deal in our ordinary linguistic and practical behaviour... Noneternal substances are transitory constellations. They come and go. They cannot be codified in a permanent list... Whereas the Vaiśeṣika considers the noneternal substances to be effects of and derived from, the eternal substances, it does not regard them as less real. They too, are real substrates of real qualities and other attributes" (Wilhelm Halbfass, *On Being and What There is*, New York: State University of New York, 1992, p. 93f).

According to Halbfass the passage quoted above (VaiśSū I.1.10) means the eternal substances generate other additional substances (cf. *ibid.* p. 94).

The most important characteristic shared by the non-eternal substance with the eternal counterpart is, however, to provide a locus for the inherence of attributes. In the Vaiśeṣika system the ascent from enumeration to definition (→*lakṣaṇa*) is a peculiar type of semantic ascent. In the view of Praśastapāda, the great exponent of Vaiśeṣika system, the list of categories represents the divisions of the real world through the medium of language. It is the nomenclature, the enumeration of the realities. But what about the definition of *dravya*? "In his definition of the category *dravya*, Praśastapāda uses such terms as *dravyatvayoga* and *guṇavattva* and not *guṇa*. The difference is significant. In its relation to *guṇa*, quality, *dravya* is a cosmological substrate, *āśraya*; in relation to *guṇavattva*, possession of qualities *dravya* is nothing but a logical subject, *dharmin*. The manner of qualification is essentially different in both cases. As a *dharmin* a substance is a logical grammatical subject of predicates.

"Praśastapāda's procedure thus implies a separation of the logical and the cosmological dimension. Yet this does not mean that there is no room for ambiguity and overlap" (*ibid.* p. 97).

Thus the problem arises – is there a bare substance absolutely devoid of qualities, a qualificant, *viśeṣya* without qualifiers, *viśeṣaṇa*? or is the substance as such and divested with all qualities inherent in it, at all identifiable? It may be recalled that in the Vaiśeṣika system a newly produced composite

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substance (*kāryadravya*) is without its proper qualities during the first moment of its existence (*utpattikālīna*) and there is an equally minute interval between the destruction of a substance and its quality (cf. *aguṇavato dravyasya guṇārambhāt karmaguṇā aguṇāḥ.* – VaiśSū VII.1.12. However, this sūtra is not found in Śaṅkaramiśra's version).

An observation of A. Quinton is perhaps quite significant: "Substance is the oldest topic of philosophical inquiry and it is also one of the most entangled" (the nature of things?).

In the debate about the concept of substance, epistemological issues become increasingly significant and conspicuous. In their own way, they illustrate the underlying ontological and metaphysical problems.

The **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra** postulates that a substance is perceived with reference to and in accordance with its attributes, such as the qualities and the universals; it is seen as being qualified and specified by its attributes. The example of identifying a white object from the perception of its whiteness (cf. VaiśSū VIII.1.6).

According to the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra** the cognition of substance, quality and action proceeds in reference to the universal and differentiator:

> सामान्यविशेषापेक्षं द्रव्यगुणकर्मसु ॥
> द्रव्ये द्रव्यगुणकर्मापेक्षम् ॥
>
> VaiśSū VIII.1.6–7
>
> (In both these sūtras the *jñānam* is continued from the previous sūtra, i.e. VIII.1.5). Cognition in respect of substance, quality and action is dependent upon the universal and the differentiator. The cognition of a substance is dependent on the knowledge of its qualities, actions and its material cause (*dravya*) by which the substance is characterised. (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The commentator Vyomaśiva, while commenting on the text the **Padārthadharmasaṅgraha** states clearly that the different qualities such as form (→*rūpa*) or colour (*varṇa*), etc. are objects of different sense organs, those are perceived through the eyes, the touch and so on. But perception and ascertainment of the substance is definitely distinct from that.

> यथा प्रत्यक्षेण रूपादिव्यतिरिक्तस्य द्रव्यस्यावधारणात्
> ... रूपं हि चक्षुषैव गृह्यते स्पर्शस्त्वगिन्द्रियेणेति
> द्वीन्द्रियग्राह्यं तु द्रव्यम् ... ।
>
> Vyomaśiva on VaiśSūBh section on dravya

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As ascertainment of the substance as distinct from colours and others is only known through perception... The colour is only known by the eye but the touch is perceived by the organ of the touch. But the substance is that which is perceived by two sense organs....
(Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

The Advaita Vedānta conceives the pure Brahman, unqualified (*nirguṇa*), devoid of any attribute and action, as unique, self-luminous and without any second element whatsoever (*advitīya*). So this system refutes the existence of →*guṇa* in substance.

इह तु शुक्लः कम्बलो रोहिणी धेनुर्नीलमुत्पलमिति द्रव्यस्यैव तस्य तस्य तेन तेन विशेषणेन प्रतीयमानत्वात् नैव द्रव्यगुणयोरग्निधूमयोरिव भेदप्रतीतिरस्ति। तस्माद् द्रव्यात्मकता गुणस्य । एतेन कर्मसामान्यविशेषसमवायानां द्रव्यात्मकता व्याख्याता ।

BrSūBh II.2.17

When we are conscious of a white blanket, or a red cow, or a blue lotus, the substance is in each case cognised by means of the quality; the latter therefore has its self in the substance. The same reasoning applies to action, genarality, particularity and inherence.
(Tr. G. Thibaut)

The Advaitin cognises everything as superimposed on the eternal Brahman, so, all substances are unreal; hence the colour etc. if made identical with the substrate called *dravya*, would also be proved to be unreal. So the inherence, *samavāya* which is recognised as an eternal relationship (*nityasambandha*) is rejected by Advaitin. The concept is clearly stated in a passage of the **Vedānta-Paribhāṣā:**

गुणाश्रयत्वं समवायिकारणत्वं वा द्रव्यत्वमिति तेऽभिमतम् । न हि निर्गुणस्य ब्रह्मणो गुणाश्रयता, नापि समवायिकारणता, समवायासिद्धेः ।

VedPar II section on anumāna

Your view is that 'substance-ness' is 'being a substratum to quality' or, 'the state of being an inherent cause'. Indeed Brahman being without quality cannot be a substratum for quality. Nor has Brahman'inherent-cause-ness', for 'inherence' itself is not proved to exist.

This is how Advaitins refute the views of Vaiśeṣikas in the context of establishing the direct perception of the Highest Self or Being, i.e. Brahman.

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However, it is really complicated in the Vaiśeṣika system how the relation of the qualities with their substratum, the substance is explained. It is to be noted that all substances can be determined as substrate (*āśraya*) in relation to their qualities, but it is not relevant for all to be for themselves without any substrate. Only the indivisible substances which underlie the divisible ones are substrates in the absolute sense. These are the un-effected cause and substrate of the non-eternal empirical things, which again are the material cause and substrate of their qualities. So the concept of three-tier relationship arises, *samavetāsamaveta samavāya* – the three layers of inherence (cf. Wilhelm Halbfass, "Zum Begriff der Substanz (*dravya*) im Vaiśeṣika", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde südasiens und Archiv für indische Philosophie*, Bd. XX (1970): pp. 145, 147).

It remains that the substances are recognised through their particular qualities, and yet they are different from those. Again, *guṇavattva*, possession of qualities is the most important characteristic and at the same time most problematic feature common to all substances, eternal or non-eternal.

In Śaiva philosophy we encounter a synthesis.

क्रिया-संबन्ध-सामान्य-द्रव्य-दिक्-कालबुद्धयः ।
सत्याः स्थैर्योपयोगाभ्यामेकानेकाश्रया मताः ॥

IPKā II.2.1

The ideas of action, relation, universal, substance, place and time, are not erroneous, because they persist (i.e. because they are not proved to be false at any later stage, as is the case with two moons) as also because they have functional capacity, i.e. serve our purpose in everyday life. They are based upon unity in multiplicity.
(Tr. K.C. Pandey)

Buddhism

The Buddhist view is different. Here the question of substratum and substrate has been raised in discussion about substance (*dravya*). The Buddhist philosophy admits eight substances which may extend to nine or even ten. The eight substances are four great elements and four secondary substances, namely, visible, smell, taste and tangible. Ninth is the organ of touch, and the tenth one is meant an additional substance.

In the **Abhidharma Kośa** the matter is dealt with in the following way:

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कामेऽष्टद्रव्यकोऽशब्दः परमाणुरनिन्द्रियः ।
कायेन्द्रियी नवद्रव्यः दशद्रव्योऽपरेन्द्रियः ॥

AbhidhKo II.22

In *Kāmadhātu* the *paramāṇu* (molecule) without the sound and the organ, is constituted of eight substances; it is constituted of nine substances, when it has the organ of touch; when there comes yet another organ, it is constituted of ten substances. (Tr. S.N. Jha)

The commentary on the above runs as follows:

किं पुनरत्र द्रव्यमेव द्रव्यं गृह्यते? आहोस्विदायतनम्? किं चातः ।
यदि द्रव्यमेव द्रव्यं गृह्यते अत्यल्पमिदमुच्यते - अष्टद्रव्यको नवदशद्रव्यक इति ।
अवश्यं हि तद् द्रव्यसंस्थानेनापि भवितव्यम्, तस्यापि परमाणुसंचितत्वात् ॥

AbhidhKoBh II.22

A question arises: whether by the word *dravya* (substance) we are to understand only *dravya* or *āyatana*? What difference does this make? In case *dravya* is an object, then in the statement – that a molecule has eight, nine or ten substances, – here the number is too small. Certainly there must be also the figure (*dravya-saṃsthāna*) of *dravya-rūpa*, because even that has been collected from molecules. (Tr. S.N. Jha)

The commentary further remarks:

... किंचिदत्र द्रव्यमेव द्रव्यं गृह्यते यदाश्रयभूतं किंचिदत्रायतनं द्रव्यं गृह्यते यदाश्रितभूतम् ।

AbhidhKoBh II.22

... Here a substance is understood, which is the substratum, or a substance is to be understood here, which is the base which is contained [base (*ā-yatana*)=sense organ (*indriya*)]. (Tr. S.N. Jha)

The technical term often used in the Buddhist text for denoting substance is →*rūpa*, e.g.:

तत्थ कतमं रूपं?
चत्वारो महाभूता, चतुन्नं च महाभूतानं उपादाय रूपं - इदं वुच्चति 'रूपं' ।

Vibh 136 (P.T.S.)

Therein what is matter? The four great essentials and the material

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qualities derived from the four great essentials. This is called matter. (Tr. P.A. Thiṭṭila)

तत्थ कतमं रूपं ।
यं रूपं निस्साय मनोविञ्ञाणधातु वत्तति-इदं वुच्चति 'रूपं' ।

Vibh 147 (P.T.S.)

There in what is matter? That material quality depending on which mind-consciousness-element exists. This is called matter. (Tr. P.A. Thiṭṭila)

Here rather the substratum-aspect is more articulated. At the same time the base-aspect (→*āyatana*, →*indriya*, sense organ) is prominent in the following passage of the same text:

तत्थ कतमं रूपं?
चक्खायतनस्स उपचयो, सोतायतनस्स उपचयो, घानायतनस्स उपचयो, जिह्वायतनस्स उपचयो, कायायतनस्स उपचयो, यं वा पनञ्ञंपि अत्थि रूप्पं चित्तजं चित्तहेतुकं चित्तसमुट्ठानं - इदं वुच्चति 'रूपम्'।

Vibh 147 (P.T.S.)

Therein what is matter? The initial arising of eye base; initial arising of ear base; initial arising of nose base, initial arising of tongue base; initial arising of body base; or whatever other material quality there is born of consciousness, caused by consciousness, generated by consciousness. This is called matter. (Tr. P.A. Thiṭṭila)

The existence of substances in the subjective consciousness of human mind is focussed here. The experiencing of those things take place through the sense organs.

Jainism

For the Jainas *dravya* or substance is primarily of two kinds: →*jīva* and *ajīva*.

जीवमजीवं दव्वं जिणवरसहेण जेण णिद्दिट्ठं ।

DSaṅg 1ab

The eminent one among the great Jainas has described the *dravya*s (substances) as *jīva* and *ajīva*. (Tr. S.C. Ghosal)

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The **Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra** explains that besides the *ajīva* type, i.e. other than souls or selves there are four types of *dravya*s. But all the five are substances. So it says:

द्रव्याणि ॥ जीवाश्च ॥

TaSū V.2–3

The four fundamental variations of an *ajīva* type, viz. *dharmāstikāya* etc. and *jīva* or soul – these five are substances. (Tr. K.K. Dixit)

The same text mentions four fundamental varieties of *ajīva* type. These are *dharmāstikāya, adharmāstikāya, ākāśāstikāya* and *pudgalāstikāya*. Including *jīva*, the *dravya*s are five in number. According to the Jaina concept this universe is not exclusively of the form of modification or change but inspite of being subject to change it is beginningless and endless. These fundamental substances in the universe are eternal and immutable.

Further, it is clear from the **Dravyasaṅgraha** (2, 5) that *jīva* is characterised by *upayoga* (utilisation or application), is formless and an agent (*kartṛ*, doer), it enjoys the fruits of his action (*karma*) and exists in *saṃsāra* (this world). Again *ajīva* should be known to be *pudgala, dharma, adharma, ākāśa* and *kāla*. *Pudgala* has a form and qualities like colour etc., but the rest has no form.

But what is the common feature in these divergent types as enumerated above, on the basis of which they are brought under one technical term *dravya*? The answer to this may be sought in the **Tattvārthādhigama-Sūtra**:

गुणपर्यायवद् द्रव्यम् ॥

TaSū III.37

A *dravya* or substance is possessed of *guṇa*s or qualities and '*paryāya*s' or modes. (Tr. K.K. Dixit)

It is to be noted in this context that the capacity of a substance to produce transformation is called its quality while the transformations produced by a quality are called modes. Thus the quality is a cause, the modes are its effects. So *dravya* becomes the source of two layers of experience, and finally an experience of three layers is involved.

Manifestation in the Arts

The following citations regarding the use of the word *dravya* from the classical Sanskrit literature illustrate these ideas.

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On Bodhisattva being exhorted by the gods in the heaven for his renunciation, it is said in the **Lalitavistara**:

धनधान्यवरो बहुद्रव्यबलीप्रिय इष्ट मतो इय बालचरी ।

LVI XII.464ab

To possess huge materials of wealth (*dravya*) and grain (one who) wishes with utmost attachment (that) is the conduct of infants.

In the same context the word *priya-dravya* is used, which can be a compound word having the first part as adjective to the final one, meaning the dear object (or person). But the compound can also be with the following word *jana* (person), hence *dravyajana* meaning worthy (*dravya*), the compound of three words thus alluding to dear and worthy persons.

मरणं च्यवनं चुति कालक्रिया प्रियद्रव्यजनेन वियोगु सदा ।

LVI XIII.473ab

Dying, transmigrating and during death time one always gets separated from dear and near ones.

The *stūpa* of Bharhut belonging to the second century B.C. beautifully illustrates different aspects of *dravya* in the medallion of a railpost representing the gift of Jetavana Grove to the Lord Buddha.

Further:

एवं च ये द्रव्यमवाप्य लोके मित्रेषु धर्मे च नियोजयन्ति ।

BudCa XI.5ab

And thus, those who, gaining riches in the world, employ them on behalf of their friends or of *dharma*..... (Tr. E.H. Johnston)

Here, wealth has certainly the underlying meaning valuable things (worthy). But in the following examples *dravya* is just thing or substance of any kind:

घनेष्वपि ततो द्रव्येष्वाकाशमधिमुच्यते ॥

BudCa XII.61cd

... then he obtains a clear idea of space with regard to its solid matter also. (Tr. E.H. Johnston)

In Aśvaghoṣa's **Saundarananda** *dravya* is used in the sense of gift and food also:

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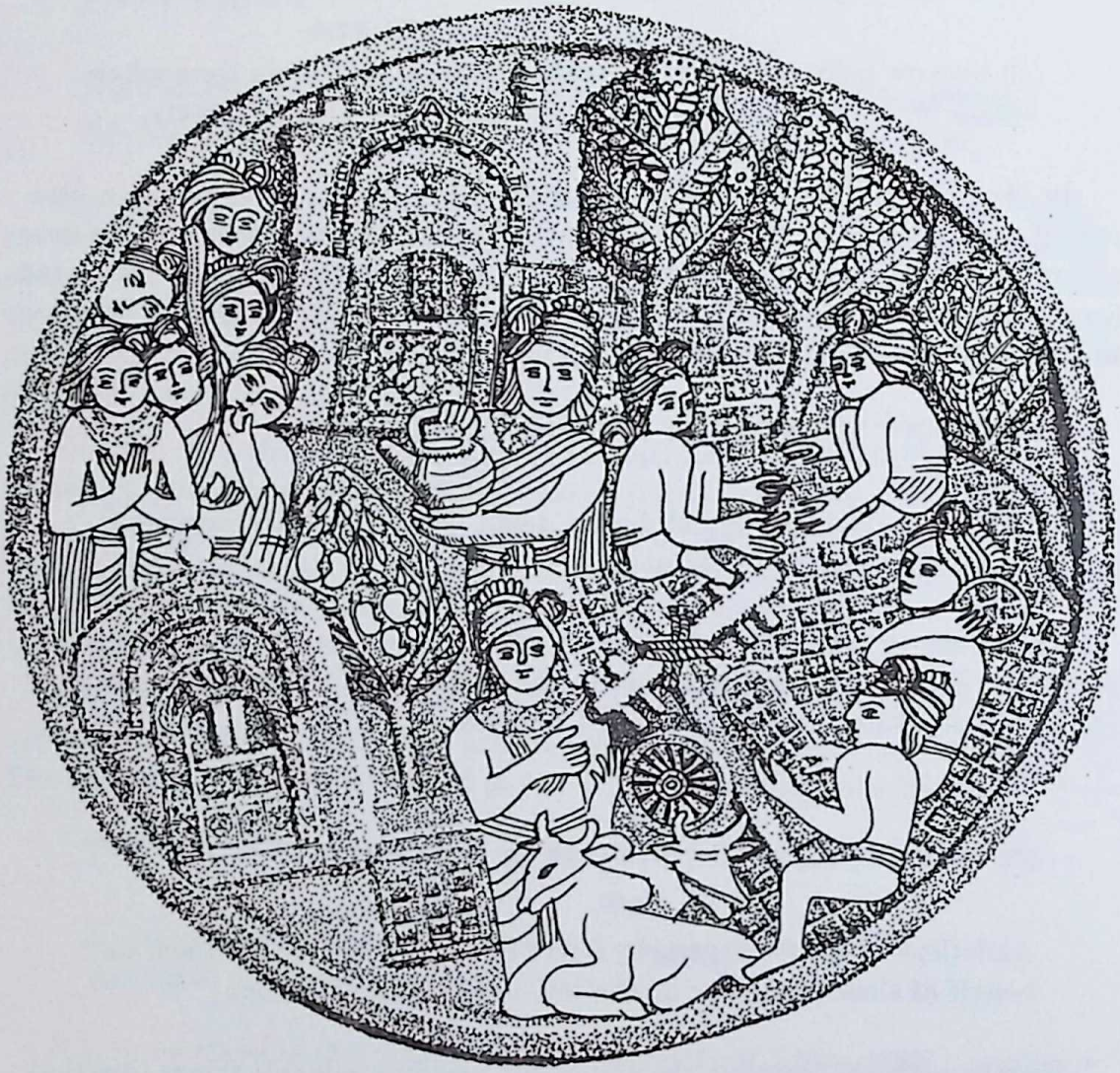

Figure 2: Gift of Jetavana Grove to Lord Buddha by the merchant Anāthapiṇḍaka, Bharhut, ca 2nd Cent. B.C.

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... द्रव्यं महदपि त्यक्ता ... ।

Saun II.40c

(Even after giving away large gifts).
... however great the substance of his gifts ... (Tr. E.H. Johnston)

द्रव्यं यथा स्यात्कटुकं रसेन तच्चोपयुक्तं मधुरं विपाके ।

Saun XVI.93ab

Just as a substance may be hot in taste and yet when eaten be easy to digest ... (Tr. E.H. Johnston)

Dravya as objects of gifts or material in possession of others is used by Āryaśūra too, e.g.:

एवं द्रव्यपरित्यागपरिचयाद् आत्मस्नेहपरित्यागमपि
अकृच्छ्रेण करोतीति ।

Jāmā XXX.45

So the habit of abandoning material objects makes it easy to give up even self-love. (Tr. J.S. Speyer)

... लोभः परद्रव्यपरिग्रहेषु वाग्-गर्हिता मद्यमयश्च पाप्मा ॥

Jāmā VIII.60cd

... coveting the goods or wives of others, speaking evil, and drinking intoxicating liquors are sins (to be avoided). (Tr. J.S. Speyer)

Kālidāsa uses *dravya* as suited objects of comparison (*upamāna*), for comparing the unique beauty of Pārvatī. The nuance remains certainly that those objects are worthy and superior with which the worldly things are compared. For instance the face is compared to a lotus or moon, signifying the superiority of these. Thus the suggestion of superior quality or worthiness remains underlying when the poet says:

सर्वोपमाद्रव्यसमुच्चयेन ... सा निर्मिता विश्वसृजा ।

Kum I.49ac

She (Umā) was formed by the creator of the universe by accumulating all the substances (*dravya*) that serve as standards of comparison.

Just as knowledge, *vidyā* is also counted as the best object among all the material things. Similarly it is to be understood that the things thought of for

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comparing are not mere ordinary objects, these are all worthy and valuable. Yet the best or most superior among all those is knowledge, e.g.:

सर्वद्रव्येषु विद्यैव द्रव्यमाहुरनुत्तमम् ।

Hit Intro. 4ab

Learning, of all things, (the wise) declare to be without a superior (the best of them all). (Tr. M.R. Kale)

द्रव्यं ते तनुरायताक्षि ।

UbhSā I.18a

Oh long-eyed lady, your body is the substance (*dravya*, a thing of worth).

It is found that the sense put forward by the grammarians according to the etymology comes back while implicating that the body itself is something worthy and valuable.

तत्तस्य किमपि द्रव्यं यो हि यस्य प्रियो जनः ॥

UttCa II.19cd

Whoever is a beloved person of one that is his indescribable treasure. (Tr. M.R. Kale)

Dravya meaning money is used in the **Hitopadeśa** (II.102) where faults of a minister are enumerated. *Dravyaparivarta*, 'misappropriation of money' is one of the faults.

If something is not worthy, issueless, unsuited, unworthy, then it is *adravya*, keeping the sense of 'worth' for the word *dravya*, and negating it, e.g.:

विनेतुः - अद्रव्यपरिग्रहोऽपि बुद्धिलाघवं प्रकाशयति ।

MvM I (under 16)

Even acceptance of an unworthy person (as a disciple) reveals the lack of intelligence of the teacher.

So both the words *dravya* and *adravya* as mentioned above are employed in respect of a person and not material.

A similar use of the word *adravya* signifying childish immaturity or foolishness is found in a verse of Āryaśūra:

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... बालस्याद्रव्यभूतस्य न दर्शनमपीष्यते ॥

Jāmā VII.26cd

... I do not want to see a fool, since he is the most unfit object.
(Tr. J.S. Speyer)

[In translation it could be also 'the most unfit person'.]

Similarly *avastu* is also employed to imply unworthiness and uselessness of a thing or a person, from the associated word *vastu* or *dravya*.

In the works on poetics *dravya* indicates more or less subject-matter as is also indicated by the term *vastu* (cf. *Vastu-nirdeśa*, indicating the subject-matter in the context of explaining how a Mahākāvya begins). At the same time it also means the composite elements or component parts of a style or aesthetic presentation, (→*vṛtti* and →*rasa*). The word *dravya* can denote a matter or substance (*padārtha*) expressed by a word. Quite interestingly the sense of 'individual', i.e. *vyakti* is also noticed through the word *dravya* in the later works on poetics.

Poetics further proceeds to identify the word-meaning and suggested or implied sense in order to appreciate the literary art. Literary creations are objects of artistic appreciation and they depict, imply and contain objects of that creative world of poetry. To appreciate and analyse those substances, this multilayered and multidimensional spectrum is to be kept in mind.

Some examples:

अथाह मां सुरगुरुः कैशिकीमपि योजय ॥
यच्च तस्याः क्षमं द्रव्यं तद्ब्रूहि द्विजसत्तम ।
एवं तेनास्म्यभिहितः प्रत्युक्तश्च मया प्रभुः ॥
दीयतां भगवन् द्रव्यं कैशिक्याः संप्रयोजकम् ।
अशक्या पुरुषैः सा तु प्रयोक्तुं स्त्रीजनादृते ।

NŚ I.42cd–44ab, 46ab

Then the *guru* of the gods (Brahmā) said to me – "add also *kaiśikī* (to dramatic performance) and O best among Dvijas! speak about the *dravya*, that is capable of the same (*kaiśikī*)." So was I told by him and replied "O Bhagavan! please give the *dravya* that could enact (*kaiśikī*) ... That (*kaiśikī*) is impossible for being performed by men without women." (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

In the context of narrating how Bharata got the instructions about enacting the *kaiśikī* form, the word *dravya* has been used in the sense of the instrument

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of the enactment of *kaiśikī vṛtti*, viz. women. Thus *dravya* could be understood as an ingredient or medium of *kaiśikī vṛtti*, rather than a substance.

Thus it is to be noted that *dravya* of this particular style called *kaiśikī* is the performer for the enactment, i.e. human beings, in this case women, as has been seen above. Naturally the sense of worthy or fit (*bhavya*) of the word *dravya*, as it has been explained grammatically and etymologically is clearly implied.

In Indian literary and dramatic art the term *rasa* has been compared to some particular drink *ṣāḍava* or the like, even though the former is an abstract realisation, a mental process and state and the later a matter of physical perception and enjoyment. The ingredients of the drink like molasses etc. are *dravyas* and the component elements of the particular *rasa*, i.e. the different mental states (→*bhāva*) are compared to each other.

यथा हि गुडादिभिर्द्रव्यैर्व्यञ्जनैरौषधिभिश्च षाडवादयो रसा निर्वर्त्यन्ते ... ।

NŚ VI.32

Just as the *rasas* like *ṣāḍava* etc. come into being through ingredients (*dravya*) like *guḍa* etc., the manifestors (*vyañjanas*) and medicinal herbs and spices (*oṣadhis*) ... (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

यथा हि नानाव्यञ्जनौषधिद्रव्यसंयोगाद् रसनिष्पत्तिः ... ।

NŚ VI.32

Just as *rasa* (taste) comes into being by combination of many *vyañjanas* (manifestors), and *oṣadhis* (spices) and *dravyas* (ingredients) ... (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

The predicate part of this context is such that the aesthetic pleasure or realisation (*rasa*) comes into being from different elements presented in combination in the arts. Thus an aesthetic realisation of the finest and formless type is compared with something of the type of material ingredients, or something of earthly taste. But so far as the idea of ingredients giving rise to something is concerned, either in worldly level or at aesthetic level of extraordinary state of mind (*lokottara*), the ingredients are all called *dravyas*.

While giving an example of the *samuccaya-alaṃkāra*, a form of rhetorics and explaining the same, the words *dravya* and →*guṇa* are used by the author of the **Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa** to indicate the basis and the improvement (embellishment) respectively.

विचिन्त्यमानं मनसाऽपि देहिनां
इदं हि लोकेषु चकास्ति दुर्लभम् ।

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निशा सचन्द्रा मदिरा च सोत्पला
प्रियानुरागोऽभिनवं च यौवनम् ॥
अत्र निशा मदिरा च द्रव्ये, अनुरागो यौवनं च गुणौ ... ।

Sark (under) IV.65

Being considered, it seems a night with moon, the wine with a lotus, a beloved with love and the youth with freshness are rare, indeed, for men to attain in the worlds by mind even.

Here night and wine both are substances and love and youth both are properties.(Tr. K.N. Mishra)

It is, however, to be noted that the night and the wine are not similar things, yet in the aesthetic analysis of the rhetorics these become denoted by the same term *dravya*, the object of description, even though one is a natural phenomenon and the other a material produced out of plants and herbs.

While explaining the process of understanding words and their meanings it is said in the **Kāvyādarśa** that the meaning of words may denote any of the following: species (*jāti*), action (*kriyā*), characteristics (*guṇa*) and substances (*dravya*):

जातिक्रियागुणद्रव्यस्वभावाख्यानमीदृशम् ।

Kāvyād II.13ab

Such is the realistic expression of species (*jāti*), of action (*kriyā*), of characteristics (*guṇa*) and of substances (*dravya*). (Tr. V. Narayana)

Bhāmaha in the same context says:

द्रव्यक्रियाजातिगुणभेदात्ते च चतुर्विधाः ।

Kāvyāl VI.21ab

Words are of four kinds based on the differences of their meanings which may be an object (*dravya*), action, class-name or quality. (Tr. P.V. Naganatha Sastry)

A similar expression in different wording is found in the **Sāhitya-Darpaṇa** a later text on poetics:

संकेतो गृह्यते जातौ गुणद्रव्यक्रियासु च ।

SāDar II.8

A convention (*saṃketa*, whereby the meaning of a word is expressed) is accepted in regard to *jāti* (genus), *guṇa* (attribute), *dravya* (substance) and *kriyā* (action). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

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At the same time:

द्रव्यशब्दा एकव्यक्तिवाचिनो हरि-हर डित्थ-डवित्थादयः ।

SāDar II.8

The words denoting *dravya*s, 'substances' actually convey specific individuals like Hari, Hara, Ḍittha, Ḍavittha, etc. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Hence the words denoting the *dravya*s would actually denote the individuals (*ekavyakti*).

In another context (of poetics) *dravya* means the subject-matter or theme, as in the following verse from the **Kāvya-Mīmāṃsā**:

असतोऽपि द्रव्यस्य निबन्धनं (काव्ये कविः) करोति। यथा मुष्टिग्राह्यत्वं सूचीभेद्यत्वं च तमसः ... ।

KāMīm XIV section on dravya

The poet also narrates such matter which does not exist in the world as a matter. For example he says that the darkness could be caught by fist and pierced by needle. (Tr. K.D. Tripathi)

The **Rasagaṅgādhara** accepts *dravya* as one of the elements like earth etc. (*dravyaṃ pṛthivyādiṣu anyatamam*). So here it has been proposed that in all earthly matters there is natural similarity.

.... सादृश्यमलंकारबहिर्भूतमेव पद्ममिवास्या मुखं द्रव्यमित्यादौ ।

RasGa 603

The similarity (lies here in) is out of the scope of poetic genious just as (in case of) her face is like a lotus, (here) face is considered as a matter. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

At the same time the author of the **Rasagaṅgādhara** uses the term *dravya* in the sense of 'individual' when he says "*dravyasya dravyeṇa virodhaḥ*", i.e. (there may be) contradiction between two 'individuals'.

While explaining the locus containing the meaning of the word *dravya* the debate regarding the denoted matter or substance, the genus etc. the word *vastu* has also been amply used side by side.

केचिद्वस्तुनि नो वाचि केचिद्वाचि न वस्तुनि ।
वाचि वस्तुनि चाप्यन्ये नान्ये वाचि न वस्तुनि ॥

Sark (under) I.69

Some meanings exist in the object, not in the word and some in the

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word not in the object. Others are in the word and in the object also, while others are neither in the word nor in the object. (Tr. K.N. Mishra)

Further:

मधुरं रसवद्वाचि वस्तुन्यपि रसस्थितिः ।
येन माद्यन्ति धीमन्तो मधुनेव मधुव्रताः ॥

Sark (under) I.37

Madhura (sweet) is possessed of *rasa* (sentiment). Sentiment resides in word as well as in an object. The wise are delighted by it as the bees are (intoxicated) by the flower-juice. (Tr. K.N. Mishra)

The **Bhāva Prakāśana** records a unique theory of the transformation of *dravya* into mind, life-force and speech, i.e. →*manas*, →*prāṇa* and →*vāk* respectively:

यत्सत्त्वपरिणामि स्याद् द्रव्यं तन्मन उच्यते ।
यद्रजःपरिणामि स्याद् द्रव्यं स प्राण उच्यते ।
यत्तमः परिणामि स्याद् द्रव्यं सा वागुदाहृता ।

BhPrak I.38a, 39a, 40a

That *dravya* which gets transformed into *sattva* (*-guṇa*) is called *manas.*

That *dravya* which gets transformed into *rajas* (*-guṇa*) is called *prāṇa.*

That *dravya* which gets transformed into *tamas* (*-guṇa*) is spoken of as *vāk.* (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

Thus the transformation of the material object into an abstract one is visualised.

In the texts on architecture and sculpture *dravya* means the constituent elements, the building materials. The individual elements and their total structural effect both are *dravyas*. It is to be understood that a structure, a palace or an image or statue is not merely a conglomeration or collection of the constituent elements. It is quite interesting that the title of the chapters on the materials for building temples and sculptures of the **Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa** is given as *dravyasādhanāni* the methods of obtaining or selecting the materials such as wood, stone, brick and mortar. In architecture *dravya* means material for construction or timber-pieces (i.e. joinery), e.g.:

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स्तम्भोत्तरादिकाङ्गानां द्रव्यं दृमोपलेष्टकाः ॥

Mayam XV.61cd

Wood, stone and brick are the materials to be used for (vertical) elements such as pillars and (horizontal) elements such as architraves. (Tr. Bruno Dagens)

एकद्रव्यकृतं शुद्धं मिश्रं द्विद्रव्यनिर्मितम् ॥
त्रिद्रव्यसंयुतं यत्तु तत्सङ्कीर्णमुदाहृतम् ।

Mayam XV.79cd–80ab

A building constructed out of only one material is said to be 'pure' whilst with two materials it is called 'mixed', and with three, 'mingled' (*saṃkīrṇa*). (Tr. Bruno Dagens)

सर्वद्रव्यैस्तु सम्पन्नं गर्भं तत् सम्पदां पदम् ।
द्रव्यहीनमसम्पन्नं गर्भं सर्वविपत्करम् ॥

Mayam XII.2

A foundation deposit provided with all the components (prescribed) is a source of success; and incomplete deposit or the absence of any one component leads to failure. (Tr. Bruno Dagens)

स्थितं वा शयितं वाऽपि यथा योग्यं तथा चरेत् ।
सुधालोहैः परैर्द्रव्यैर्यथा योग्यं तथा चरेत् ॥

Mayam XXIII.128

The image may be standing or stretched out, depending upon which is most convenient and also in relation to circumstance, it may be made in stucco, metal or other materials; if in metal, it may be hollow or solid. (Tr. Bruno Dagens)

In the case of painting, the medium of painting the base are called *lepadravya*, the liquid medium which is smeared to produce the canvas ready for drawing a picture.

सुधया निर्मितां भित्तिं श्लक्ष्णां क्षतविवर्जिताम् ।
लेपयेच्चित्रकर्मार्थं लेपद्रव्यं प्रचक्ष्यते ॥

Abhil Ālekhyakarma, 141

To make it ready for painting apply medium (*lip*) to the wall that has been prepared with plaster (*sudhā*) and is smooth and unbroken. The liquid medium (*lepadravya*) is described.
(Tr. A.K. Coomaraswamy)

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Thus in the arts be it painting or sculpture or building or even literary and dramatic art the ingredients are called *dravyas*, the substratum of the right conglomeration and proportion of which the total art object stands or is created, nevertheless transcending in multi-dimensions the mere collection of some visible objects. In this manner the transformation of the constituent substances or the visible objects into perceptible concepts or realisations or abstract feelings is an ongoing process of transubstantiation from non-eternity to eternity and from the gross to the subtle.

Process

The term *dravya* is used in the Epics Purāṇas and also in the Dharmaśāstras as denoting material objects of worldly use and consumption. In the philosophical context, it means together with other things the human body too. This reminds again of the verse of the **Vākyapadīya** enumerating the meaning of the word *dravya* as →*ātman*, →*vastu*, →*śarīra*, etc. (cf. Vāk III.2.1). However, it is intersting to note that the commentary of Helārāja on the same states clearly that in addition to those absolute *pāramārthika* denotations of the term *dravya* there is also the denotation of the empirical and common expression, i.e. usual expression of things in the worldly sense (*sāṃvyavahārika*). In literature the use of the term is more in this sense its empirical experience and material objects. Yet sometimes it is used in the sense of worthiness. The use of the term to signify wealth or treasure goes back to cognate word *draviṇa* since the time of the Vedas.

Although this is rather a process of realisation in art, the roots are subtly present in the philosophical texts of Nyāya stating that the substancehood itself is the cause of the application or transaction with substances (*dravya*) (*dravyatvaṃ tu dravyavyavahāranimittam* – Kiraṇāvalī, Ed. G. Shastri, Vol. II, p. 150). The substance holds within itself its potential of being the substratum of other substances (*dravyārambhakatvaṃ dravyasamavāyikāraṇatvam* – *ibid.* p. 195).

The Vedānta philosophy evolved its thought around eternal and noneternal substances, the *nityavastu* and *anityavastu* respectively. It is to be noted that to avoid confusion with *nityadravyas* as expounded in the Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika philosophy, the Vedānta philosophy specially Ācārya Śaṅkara (on the Brahma-Sūtra) says the ability to discriminate between the eternal and non-eternal, (*nityānitya-vastuviveka*) is one of the pre-requisites of undertaking the studies of Vedānta. In Śaṅkara's exposition of Brahman all substances are divided into three types, eternal (*pāramārthika*), pragmatic (*vyavahārika*) and illusory

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(*prātibhāsika*). But the word *vastu* is merely, in use than *dravya* in the said context. The eternally existing Brahman is the only 'Reality' or '*sad vastu*' in the true sense. The pragmatic world, though apparently perceived has no real existence or *vastusattā*. The illusory things like the cognition of a snake in a rope or things experienced in dream are out and out unreal. So far attaining liberation of all bondage discriminating the *nityavastu* from *anityavastu* is the very stepping stone.

In the arts the significance of *dravya* is very important. In literature the subject matter, the medium and also its embellishment – all are *dravya*. The individuals or the constituent elements are *dravya*. At the same time the total art form is something which excels the individuals. This complete form is also a *dravya*. So both the individuals and the collective composites are meant by *dravya*. And when the composite form is visible or perceptible by any other medium of sense organ, though conscious of the individual components the indivisible concept of *dravya* or substance dominates in the consciousness, as it happens when somebody perceives a grove of trees or a herd of animals like cows or so, yet it is not the sense of a collection of individuals only.

Vācaspatimiśra has explained this concept in the following manner.

... येऽपि तदाश्रयो द्रव्यमास्थिषत तैरपि तत्समुदायोऽनुभूयमानो नापह्नोतव्यः । न च तदपह्नवे तयोराधारो द्रव्यमिति भवति । तस्मात्तदेवास्तु द्रव्यम् । न तु ताभ्यां तत्समुदायाच्च तदाधारमपरं द्रव्यमुपलभामहे । ग्रावभ्यो ग्रावसमुदायादिव च तदाधारमवरं पृथग्विधं शिखरम् । समूहो द्रव्यमित्युक्तं तत्र समूहमात्रं द्रव्यमितिभ्रमापनुत्तये समूहविशेषो द्रव्यमिति निर्धारयितुं समूहप्रकारानाह ..... युतसिद्धाः पृथक्सिद्धाः सान्तराला अवयवा यस्य स तथोक्तः, यूथं वनमिति । सान्तराला हि तदवयवा वृक्षाश्च गावश्च । अयुतसिद्धावयवश्च समूहो वृक्षो गौः परमाणुरिति । निरन्तरा हि तदवयवाः सामान्यविशेषा वा सास्नादयो वेति । तदेतेषु समूहेषु द्रव्यभूतं समूहं निर्धारयति ... ।

YSūBh III.44

... just as the mountain-peak is a distinct thing and other than the stones or the aggregate of stones, and underlies them. Thus we say that substance is a collection [and not any thing underlying]. From this point of view, to prevent the [error that substance is any kind of a collection and] to reach the position that substance is a special kind of collection, he describes various kinds of collections in the words, (For ... of two kinds.) Since this is so, substance is not any kind of a collection.... A collection of which the parts exist separately, is one of the parts of which have an independent existence, apart, with intervals between; for when the word 'herd' or 'grove' is

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> spoken, the trees and the cows which are the parts of these [collections are thought to] have intervals between them. A tree, a cow, or an atom is a collection of which the parts do not exist separately, since neither the generic-form and the particular, which are the parts of these, have intervals between them, nor do the dewlap and the other [characteristic parts] of the cow have intervals between them. From among these same collections he selects that collection which constitutes a substance (*dravya*), saying, (cannot be separated).
> (Tr. J.H. Woods)

This concept is evident in the sphere of painting or sculpture. The ingredients of painting like colour, paste, etc., the canvas, the instruments of drawing, the lines, the dots and the shapes – square, triangle, circular, etc. can be analyzed individually but the collective of these perceptions will not be the perception of the picture painted. Further, beyond the figure visible in painting, the deity or an abstract idea which is communicated through the image in the painting is also perceived by the conscious viewer. So these three layers of perception take place and at no stage it is devoid of perceiving a *dravya*. Nevertheless the *dravya*s are different in status and quality.

Similarly in case of sculpture – clay, stones, wood, metal, etc. are the material *dravya* which are shaped into different forms, qualify as *dravya*s. The figures, the deities, or concepts which are thus given to iconographic forms are also *dravya*s but yet excelling the constellation of the materials in a particular form. If the substratum and sustained both are *dravya*s then only is the process complete.

In the performing arts the aesthetic sentiment, →*rasa* presented has its component elements as *dravya*s, the styles *kaiśikī* etc. have their constituent elements and mediums like 'women' etc. as *dravya*s, the subject-matter taken up as theme by the poet is also →*vastu* or *dravya* and the total thing is also *dravya* according to the concepts stated so far. Hence, this multi-media and multidimensional projection of the concept of *dravya* becomes quite evident.

Again, for the Sāma-chanter the *ṛk*s are *dravya*, for the other chanters, reciters or singers the text of the song for chanting, reciting etc. is always present as the base substance, as *dravya*, and is perceptible. A chanting or singing is a composite creation of the text and the music. In case of this type of audio-perception also the substratum, the text and the sustained, the qualification of tune are indivisible and received or cognised in this process.

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Conclusion

The concept of *dravya* as elucidated in different branches of literature prove the dynamism of Indian thought. It has moved from cognising the things at elemental level to the highest levels of realisation of truth which is often so fine and abstract or formless. The ongoing process of transformation of the elements and of mind is the very special feature or the concept of *dravya*. At the same time the all-comprehensive approach and multilayered vision underlying the conceptions *dravya* and its parallel words is clear. The varied meanings all elude to the intrinsic relationship of the material and the non-material, substance and essence.

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Ratna Basu

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DHĀTU

Overview

The term *dhātu* (m.) is widely used throughout Sanskrit and Pali literature and has assumed various meanings. The term is found both in single and compound forms. The meanings conveyed by *dhātu* range from its etymological meaning to the technical connotation confined to a particular discipline. Some of the meanings generally conveyed by *dhātu* are: substance, element, basic material, constituent, ingredient, mineral, metal, body element, body fluid, verbal root, supreme spirit, specific sounds and relic. The common idea behind this multitude of meanings is that of support or a supporting element.

In the early Vedic literature, the term *dhātu* is used in its derivative sense, namely supporter or sustainer and in the later Vedic literature, *dhātu* conveys varied constituents in different contexts. The majority of the citations are in the sacrificial context. In the technical usage of the term, Āyurveda is prominent. Here *dhātu* conveys the basic body elements as well as the humours. In the science of language, *dhātu* stands for the verbal root, the basis of all linguistic expressions. In the Vedānta system, the term *dhātu* is used to describe the supreme spirit in the form of 'consciousness'.

In Tantric literature, seven syllables from *ya* to *sa* are known as *dhātu*s, the constituents of body elements. In the Buddhist literature both in Pali as well as in Sanskrit, the term *dhātu* conveys psycho-physical states (*viññāṇa*) of human personality in respect of all elements. It also denotes mortal remains of Lord Buddha which are worshipped as the relics.

In the Purāṇas and in the classical Sanskrit literature, the term *dhātu* is commonly used in the sense of a mineral or a metal in general and the red ochre in particular. Sometimes it is also propounded in the system of Āyurveda.

In Music, four main varieties of *dhātu* have been named *vistāra*, →*karaṇa*, *āviddha* and *vyañjana*. Here they allude to the structure of musical composition.

In the works on architecture the term refers to the colouring substances used for foundation deposits.

Etymology and Related Terms

The word *dhātu* is derived from the root *dhā-* 'to place' or 'to put' with the agentive suffix *tu*. Thus its etymological meaning is 'one who places or supports'.

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The word can also be traced back to the root *dhṛ-* 'to hold' or 'to bear'. The basic idea of supporting or holding has developed into different technical nuances in different systems which offer different etymologies of *dhātu*. For instance, in the **Nirukta** of Yāska, *dhātu* appears as a grammatical technical term meaning 'a verbal root'. Yāska explains the etymology of *dhātu*, as follows:

धातुर्दधातेः । Nir I.20

Dhātu is so called, because it puts (words in a proper form).

This derivation of *dhātu* is based on the basic principle of etymology accepted by Yāska, namely, that all nouns are derived from verbal roots. It means that a verbal root forms the basis of each and every word in the language. Hence it is called *dhātu*. The **Dhātupāṭha**, which forms an appendix to Sanskrit grammar contains a list of about 2000 *dhātu*s to which all Sanskrit words, verbs, substantives, adjectives, etc. are subjected to scientific interpretation of the language.

In Ayurvedic texts, the term *dhātu* is traced back to both the roots *dhṛ-* and *dhā-*. For instance, Suśruta gives the etymology of *dhātu* from the root *dhṛ-* which holds true for all body elements in the following manner:

त एते शरीरधारणाद्धातव इत्युच्यन्ते ॥

SuSam SūSthā XIV.20

These (the seven body elements fluid, blood, etc., sweat, excretion, urine, wind, bile and phlegm) are called *dhātu*s, because they hold the body.

Cakrapāṇidatta in his commentary on the **Caraka Saṃhitā** explains the meaning of *dhātu*, as follows:

पुरुषधारणाद् धातुः ।

Comm. on CarSam ŚāSthā I.3

Dhātu is so called, because it supports man (i.e. a human body).

Ḍalhaṇa in his commentary on the **Suśruta Saṃhitā** explains the designation *dhātu*, with reference to the three bodily humours by deriving it from the root *dhā-*:

कफपित्तपुरीषाण्यपि प्राकृतानि स्वकर्मणा दधतीति धातवः ।

Ḍalhaṇa on SuSam ŚāSthā IV.5

Phlegm, bile and excretion are also called *dhātu*s, because they support the body by means of their respective functions.

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In the Buddhist text **Abhidharma Kośa**, *dhātu* is derived from the root *dhṛ-* with a different meaning:

स्वलक्षणधारणाद् धातुः ।

AbhidhKoBh III.3cd

(Physical and material elements are called) *dhātu*s, because of holding their own characteristics.

According to this etymology, a *dhātu* is so called because each *dhātu* has its own nature, distinct from that of others.

The **Vācaspatyam** while deriving the word from the root *dhā-* cites the following etymology of *dhātu* which conveys the meaning of those fluids and their compositions which are described in the works on alchemy that lead to a youthful life:

बलीपलितखालित्यकार्श्यबल्यजरामयान् ।
निवार्य देहं दधति नृणां तद् धातवो यथा ॥

Since they (the fluids) keep the body away from wrinkles, gray hair, boldness, feebleness, loss of power, old age and disease, they are called *dhātu*s.

The **Vācaspatyam** offers another meaning of *dhātu* from the same etymology which conveys the meaning of the highest soul:

धीयते सर्वं निःक्षिप्यते सुषुप्त्यादावस्मिन् ।

(That soul is called *dhātu* because) in it all things are merged as in deep sleep.

These derivations contain the use of the root *dhā-* with different shades of meaning.

Although the term can thus traced back to the two roots *dhṛ-* and *dhā-* in different works mentioned above, its derivation from the root *dhā-* is grammatically justified.

The word *dhātu* has different synonyms in different contexts. *Dhātṛ*, *Vidhātṛ*, etc. are synonyms of *dhātu* in the sense of the highest Lord. The grammatical *dhātu* is sometimes called *ākhyāta* meaning 'that by which an action is conveyed' (*ākhyātā kriyā yena tad ākhyātam*).

Numerous compounded expressions with *dhātu* as a constituent are found in Sanskrit literature. For instance, in the works on alchemy words like *dhātughna*,

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'sour gruel' and *dhātuhan*, 'sulphur' refer to that material which destroys the mineral to which it is applied. Similarly, the term *dhātuka* is used to convey a bitumen. A few other compounds with *dhātu* are *dhātukāsīsa*, 'red sulphate', *dhātukriyā*, 'metallurgy' and *dhātukuśala*, 'a metallurgist'. In the Buddhist literature, the term *dhātugarbha* is used to denote a receptacle of a relic. In Āyurveda both the terms *dhātukṣobha*, 'disturbance among bodily elements' and *dhātukṣaya*, 'decay of bodily elements' are used in the context when a bodily disorder or deficiency is discussed.

Layers of Meaning

The term *dhātu* has wide range of connotations. The word is used in various contexts to convey very different things. A casual glance at these meanings of *dhātu* reveals that the term connotes both micro and macro levels. While it stands on the one hand for the five great elements, the building blocks of the material world on the other, it denotes the basic elements of which the human body is constituted. It is further interesting to note that *dhātu* stands for both, the fundamental physical substance and the supreme consciousness.

In the **Abhidhānapradīpikā** two *dhātus*, viz. *saṅkhatadhātu* and *asaṅkhatadhātu*, denote the conditioned and the unconditioned or the material and the immaterial. The three *dhātus* are *kāmadhātu*, *rūpadhātu* and *arūpadhātu*, which means the element of 'desire', of 'form' and of 'absence of form'. Another similar classification can be *rūpadhātu, arūpadhātu* and *nirodhadhātu*. Here '*nirodha*' means annihilation. Under another classification three *dhātus* are *hīnadhātu, majjhimadhātu*, and *paṇītadhātu*. The four *dhātus* are the four →*mahābhūtas*. According to another classification they are *pathavīdhātu, āpodhātu, tejodhātu* and *vāyodhātu*. They refer to the elements of earth, water, fire and air. In some works on Buddhism, names of six *dhātus* have been mentioned as: *pathavīdhātu, āpodhātu, tejodhātu, vāyodhātu, ākāśadhātu* and *viññāṇadhātu*. These are the elements of earth, water, fire, air, space and intelligence. E. Burnouf in his book on *Indian Buddhism*, mentions eighteen forms of *dhātu*.

Indeed, the term *dhātu* is used in different disciplines to denote the basic material within their respective framework.

Development of the Concept

In an occurrence in the **Ṛgveda**, the term *dhātu* conveys its derivative meaning, namely, supporter, in the following verse:

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अत्यं हविः सचते सच्च धातु चारिष्टगातुः स होता सहोभरिः ।
प्रसर्स्राणो अनु बर्हिर्वृषा शिशुर्मध्ये युवाजरो विस्रुहा हितः ॥

ṚV V.44.3

Agni whose path is unhindered, who is the *hotṛ*, 'priest' and who is the wielder of power, accompanies the offering which is continuous (continuously flowing), truthful and the supporter (of all). Moving along the *barhis* he (Agni), the almighty child, youthful and undecaying, has been placed among the plants. (Tr. S.K. Lal)

Here *dhātu* which is an adjective of *havis* is explained by Sāyaṇa on the above verse, as follows:

धातु च धारकं सर्वस्य । हूयमानस्य हविषः आदित्यद्वारा वृष्टिसाधनत्वात् तया च वृष्ट्या प्रजोत्पत्तेर्धारकत्वम् ।

Sāyaṇa on ṚV V.44.3

Dhātu means the supporter of all. The oblation which is being offered produces rain through the sun and since through the rain, life is created (on this earth), it becomes the supporter.

Although *dhātu* in its uncompounded form is found nowhere else in the Vedas, it is attested as a final member of the compounds such as *tridhātu, saptadhātu*, etc. In almost all the cases of compounds the first constituent is a numeral. In these compounds the meaning of *dhātu* is slightly modified although the basic idea of support continues to be there. Here the support is not external, it comes from within. The supporting element forms part of the object. Thus it is a constitutent which is conveyed by the term *dhātu*. For example, Agni describes himself as *tridhātu* in the following verse:

अग्निरस्मि जन्मना जातवेदा घृतं मे चक्षुरमृतं म आसन् ।
अर्कस्त्रिधातू रजसो विमानोऽजस्रो घर्मो हविरस्मि नाम ॥

ṚV III.26.7

Agni am I who know, by birth, all creatures. Mine eye is butter, in my mouth is nectar. I am light threefold, measurer of the region; exhaustless heat am I named burnt-oblation. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

Sāyaṇa paraphrases *tridhātu* as: *tredhātmānaṃ vibhajya* 'having divided himself into three parts, (Agni, Vāyu and Āditya)' or as: *prāṇāpānavyānātmā tridhā vartamāno'rko'rcanīyaḥ yaḥ prāṇo'sti*, 'One who is breath of threefold character consisting of →*prāṇa, apāna* and *vyāna*'.

In the **Ṛgveda** (V.43.13) Agni is described as *tridhātuśṛṅga*, 'having horns of three kinds'. Sāyaṇa explains this in his commentary:

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त्रिप्रकारक शृङ्गवदुन्नतलोहितशुक्लकृष्णवर्णज्वालः ।

Sāyaṇa on ṚV V.43.13

(Agni) has high flames of red, white and black colours which look like a three-fold horn.

The words *tridhātu, pañcadhātu, saptadhātu*, etc. often occur in Vedic literature. In all the occurrences *dhātu* means 'fold' or 'kind'. For instance, in the **Ṛgveda** (IV.5.6) *manman* 'wealth' is described as *saptadhātu* 'sevenfold'. The seven kinds of wealth are described by Sāyaṇa:

'ग्राम्यारण्यभेदेन सप्तप्रकारकम् । सप्त ग्राम्याः पशवः सप्तारण्या' इति श्रुतेः । (TSam II.4.6.2)

Sāyaṇa on ṚV IV.5.6

(The wealth) is of seven kinds which is again of two types, domesticated and wild, because it is taught in the Veda that there are seven domesticated animals and seven wild animals.

The term *dhātu* continues to convey the same meaning, namely, constituent in the later Śrauta literature where it occurs in both non-compounded and compounded forms. The constituent denoted by the term *dhātu* can be either a blade of grass or a lump of clay. Thus for instance, in the following passage *dhātu* refers to a blade of grass:

अथ बर्हिषो धातूनाँ संप्रलुप्य ध्रुवायां समनक्ति ॥

BŚrSū I.2

Then (the Adhvaryu) should pick up some *darbha* blades from each of the bunches of *barhis* and dip them into the *dhruvā* (ladle). (Tr. R.N. Dandekar)

Here *dhātu* conveys the meaning of a *darbha* blade which is a constituent of *barhis*, 'sacrificial grass'.

While prescribing the preparation of *ukhā*, 'the sacrificial fire pan' in the piling of fire altar which is a subsidiary rite of Soma sacrifice the **Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra** refers to *dhātu* in the following sentence:

अन्तानुन्नीय सर्वतः प्रथमं धातुमादधाति रुद्रस्त्वेति ॥

KātŚrSū XVI.3.27

Having then raised the fringes on all the sides he places the first lump (on one of the sides) reciting (the *mantra*) *rudrastvā* etc. (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

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When *barhis* is being spread on the sacrificial altar it is strewn in rows. The **Bhāradvāja Śrauta-Sūtra** prescribes the use of →*mantras* while strewing the grass in the following statement:

धातौ धातौ मन्त्रं जपति ॥

BhārŚrSū II.9.1

He should murmur the formula with regard to the strewing of each row. (Tr. C.G. Kashikar)

Here the term *dhātu* denotes the rows of grass strewn on the altar. All such *dhātus* together constitute *barhis.*

The idea of a basic constituent conveyed by *dhātu* is again reflected in the following passage in the **Chāndogya Upaniṣad**:

अन्नमशितं त्रेधा विधीयते । तस्य यः स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तत्पुरीषं भवति ।
यो मध्यमस्तन्मांसम् । योऽणिष्ठस्तन्मनः ।

ChUp VI.5.1

Food, when eaten, becomes divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest constituent becomes the feces; that which is medium, the flesh; that which is finest, the mind. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Some Upaniṣads contain the word '*dhātuprasāda*', which has been interpreted by Śaṅkara as *karaṇāni*, i.e. sense organs.

मन आदीनि करणानि धातवः शरीरस्य धारणात् ... ।

ŚBh on KaṭhUp II.20

Mind and other organs are termed as *dhātus* because they sustain the body. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

A *dhātu* is thus the pure essence of everything that exists. The highest Soul in the form of Consciousness is described as the sixth *dhātu* which is a receptacle of the five *dhātus* in the body.

स्त्रीपुंसयोस्तु संयोगे विशुद्धे शुक्रशोणिते ।
पञ्चधातून् स्वयं षष्ठ आदत्ते युगपत् प्रभुः ॥

YājSm III.72

When there is a pure union of the semen and blood of a male and a female, the five elements are simultaneously put together by the Lord who is the sixth element.

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This extension of the connotation of *dhātu* from the domain of the material world to the domain of conscionsness has continued in the Vedānta system, more particularly, in the works of Śaṅkara. In his commentary on the **Brahma-Sūtra** Śaṅkara describes →*Īśvara*, 'God' as *cetana-dhātu*, 'Element of Consciousness'.

न हि नित्यमुक्तस्वरूपात् सर्वज्ञादीश्वरादन्यश्चेतनो धातुर्द्वितीयो वेदान्तार्थ-निरूपणायामुपलभ्यते ।

ŚBh on BrSū II.3.30

For in attempting to determine the object of the Vedānta-texts we meet with no other intelligent substance but the one omniscient Lord whose nature is eternal freedom. (Tr. G. Thibaut)

At another place Śaṅkara describes *dhātu* as a synonym of →*cit*, 'Consciousness' on the basis of its etymology:

कार्यकारणप्रपञ्चधारणाच्चिदेव धातुः ।

ViSahasrBh 18

Dhātu means the *cit* which sustains the universe of cause and effect. (Tr. R.A. Sastry)

Epics and Purāṇas

The Epic and Puranic literature in Sanskrit also uses the term *dhātu* sometimes in the technical sense such as the five great *bhūtas* and the seven body elements.

एते ते धातवः पञ्च ब्रह्मा यानसृजत् पुरा ।
आवृता यैरिमे लोका महाभूताभिसंज्ञितैः ॥

MBh XII.177.1

These (i.e. the five *bhūtas*) are the five *dhātus* which were produced earlier by Brahman. These worlds are pervaded by these (*dhātus*) called *mahābhūtas*.

Vidura describes the body elements as transitory:

नित्यो धर्मः सुखदुःखे त्वनित्ये नित्यो जीवो धातुरस्य त्वनित्यः ।
त्यत्त्वानित्यं प्रतितिष्ठस्व नित्ये संतुष्य त्वं तोषपरो हि लाभः ॥

MBh V.40.12

Dharma is permanent while joy and sorrow are transitory. The Soul

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is permanent while the body-elements are transitory. Having abandoned that which is transitory you may establish yourself in that which is permanent and be satisfied. For satisfaction is the highest achievement.

Further, in the same text the term *dhātu* is used to denote the five elements:

धातवः पञ्चशाखोऽयं खं वायुर्ज्योतिरम्बु भूः ।
ते स्वभावेन तिष्ठन्ति वियुज्यन्ते स्वभावतः ॥

MBh XII.212.7

The ingredients that form the body are water, ether, wind, heat and earth. These exist together according to their own nature. They become separated again according to their own nature.
(Tr. M.N. Dutt)

अन्योन्यापाश्रयाश्चैव तथान्योन्यानुवर्तिनः ।
अन्योन्यव्यतिषक्ताश्च त्रिगुणाः पञ्च धातवः ॥

MBh XIV.36.5

They (the three qualities) take refuge in one another, and follow one another. They are also joined with one another. The five (principal) elements are marked by (these) three qualites. (Tr. M.N. Dutt)

The **Liṅga Purāṇa** (I.17.80) also describes the same seven syllables and the seven body elements of Lord Śiva. The origin of different sounds from different body elements described in later texts on the science of music may be traced to this identification of sounds with body elements.

Grammar

Dhātu is of the greatest importance in Sanskrit language and it is like the primitive elements in Chemistry. It is that primary part of a word which being incapable of grammatical decomposition is supposed to contain the primary meaning antecedent to any addition or modification. When a root has been developed in any form by the addition of letters or syllables or by internal change it becomes a stem which again is subject to further development by the addition of letters or syllables called case-endings or inflexions (*vibhakti*) whether nominal or verbal.

There are, in Sanskrit, about two thousand roots. All these convey some simple idea conveniently expressed in English by the sign of the infinitive 'to'

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as in *ad-* 'to eat', though it must be noted that the simple *dhātu ad-* only denotes the idea of eating. Every word in Sanskrit whether substantive, adjective, verb or adverb stands in close filial relationship to its *dhātu.*

In the **Nirukta** of Yāska, *dhātu* appears as a technical term meaning 'verbal root'. Yāska discussed whether all nouns are derived from verbs (*ākhyāta*) or not. Yāska often uses another synonym for *dhātu*, namely, *ākhyāta.* After discussing the fourfold division of speech as *nāman* 'substantive', *ākhyāta* 'verbal root', *upasarga* 'prefix' and *nipāta* 'particle', Yāska distinguishes between *nāman* and *ākhyāta*, as follows:

भावप्रधानमाख्यातं सत्त्वप्रधानानि नामानि ।

Nir I.1

The verb has *becoming* as its fundamental notion, nouns have *being* as their fundamental notion. (Tr. L. Sarup)

Yāska further refers to the principle of the verbal origin of all nouns:

तत्र नामान्याख्यातजानीति शाकटायनो नैरुक्तसमयश्च ।

Nir I.12

With reference to this Śākaṭāyana holds that nouns are derived from verbs. This, too is the doctrine of the etymologists. (Tr. L. Sarup)

Pāṇini's grammar besides having the **Aṣṭādhyāyī** consists of four supplementary texts. Among them the **Dhātupāṭha** is a register of verbal roots (*dhātus*) grouped under ten classes according to their conjugational variations. The **Dhātupāṭha** indicates the primary meanings of the roots. Pāṇini has defined *dhātu* as: '*bhūvādayo dhātavaḥ*' (I.3.1), which means *bhū-* etc. (*ādi*) are called *dhātu.* Pāṇini accepts the principle of the verbal origin of all nouns to the extent that their derivations are based on grammatically regular operations. Although Pāṇini does not semantically define a *dhātu*, his followers explain the meaning of a *dhātu* as *kriyā* 'action'. The **Kāśikā** explains Pāṇini's definition of *dhātu* in the following manner:

'भू' इत्येवमादयः शब्दाः क्रियावचना धातुसंज्ञा भवन्ति ।

Kāśikā on Pā I.3.1

The words *bhū* etc. which convey action are called *dhātu.*

In the **Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa** *dhātus* have been mentioned as of six types:

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... धातवः षोढा – परिपठिताः, अपरिपठिताः, परिपठितापरिपठिताः, प्रत्ययधातवः, नामधातवः, प्रत्ययनामधातवश्चेति ।

ŚṛPrak I (3)

Dhātus are six in number – (i) *paripaṭhitas*, [*dhātus* which have been enumerated in the Dhātupāṭha], (ii) *aparipaṭhitas* (which have not been enumerated in the Dhātupāṭha), (iii) *paripaṭhitāparipaṭhitas* (those which have not been enumerated in the Dhātupāṭha, but enumerated in the Sūtrapāṭha), (iv) *pratyayadhātus* (those, which are ended with suffixes), (v) *nāmadhātus* (denominatives), and (vi) *pratyayanāmadhātus* (actually the *paripaṭhita dhātus* from which *kvip* suffixes have been dropped to establish their *nāmatva* and the *nāmans* also, from which *kvip* etc. have been removed to establish their *dhātutva*, i.e. verbal form – may be considered as both *nāmas* and *dhātus* by virtue of their suffixes and therefore, should be designated as *pratyayanāmadhātus*). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

The centrality of *dhātu* in grammar is due to two reasons, viz. (i) the *kārakas* which form the backbone of the Paninian system, have a *dhātu* as their nucleus around which they move, and (ii) action plays a central role in the verbal cognition according to the grammarians. Thus in the science of language, both in the **Nirukta** and in the grammar *dhātu* forms the very foundation of all linguistic expressions.

In the metaphysics of Sanskrit grammar *dhātu* is raised to the status of pure existence which is the essence of every being. Bhartṛhari, the grammarian philosopher, says in his **Vākyapadīya** that the action conveyed by every root ultimately consists of →*sattā* 'existence':

अन्त्ये वात्मनि या सत्ता सा क्रिया कैश्चिदिष्यते ।
भाव एव हि धात्वर्थ इत्यविच्छिन्न आगमः ॥

Vāk III.8.23

Some are of the view that the Being which inheres in the last moment or part is action. *Bhāva*, 'state' is the meaning of a root according to the unbroken tradition. (Tr. K.A.S. Iyer)

Āyurveda

In Āyurveda the term *dhātu* has a wider connotation. The Ayurvedic lexicon explains the basic meaning of *dhātu* as *āśraya* 'support' or →*ādhāra* 'substratum'. The support or substratum with reference to the human body which is

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at the nucleus of the Ayurvedic system, is of various kinds. To start with, the *puruṣa* 'human being' is identified with the five great elements in the following verse of the **Caraka Saṃhitā**:

खादयश्चेतनाषष्ठा धातवः पुरुषः स्मृतः ।
चेतनाधातुरप्येकः स्मृतः पुरुषसंज्ञकः ॥

CarSam ŚāSthā I.16

A *puruṣa* is defined as the (five) great elements *kha* (sky) etc. with consciousness as the sixth (element). The element of consciousness alone is also understood as *puruṣa* in some systems.

The human body is made of five →*bhūta*s and therefore is described throughout Sanskrit literature as *pāñcabhautika* or *pañcadhātu*. *Dhātu* is thus a synonym of *bhūta*, 'the element'. These five *dhātu*s further give rise to the seven *dhātu*s which are the basic constituents of the human body. They are listed as follows:

रसासृङ्मांसमेदोऽस्थिमज्जाशुक्राणि धातवः ।

AṣṭH I.1.13ab

The (seven) *dhātu*s are serum, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen.

In other lists, →*rasa* and *meda* are replaced by *tvac* and *snāyu*. For instance, following is the list given by Vyāsa in his Bhāṣya on the **Yoga-Sūtra**:

धातवः सप्त त्वग्लोहितमांसस्नाय्वस्थिमज्जाशुक्राणि ।

YSūBh III.29

The seven *dhātu*s are skin, blood, muscle, sinew, bone, marrow and semen.

Yet another list of ten *dhātu*s is given by putting the above two lists together and adding one more element in the following verse:

रसासृङ्मांसमेदोऽस्थिमज्जाशुक्राणि धातवः ।
सप्तैव दशवैकेषां रोमत्वक्स्नायुभिः सह ॥

Abhidhānacintāmaṇi 619

There are seven *dhātu*s namely, serum, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen. According to some (scholars) there are ten *dhātu*s including hair, skin and sinew.

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Further, in addition to these seven or ten basic constituents of the human body, the three *malas* or humours, namely, *vāta, pitta* and *kapha* are also referred to as *dhātus* in the following verse:

रक्तं लसीका त्वङ्मांसं दूष्यं दोषास्त्रयो मलाः ।
विसर्पाणां समुत्पत्तौ विज्ञेयाः सप्त धातवः ॥

CarSam CikSthā XXI.15

Rakta (blood), *lasīkā* (lymph), *tvak* (skin) and *māṃsa* (muscle)-these are *dūṣya* (substratum of pathology) and three *malas* (*vāta, pitta* and *kapha*) are *doṣas* (pathogenic factors). These seven pathogenic materials are responsible for production of erysipelas. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

रसाद्रक्तं ततो मांसं मांसान्मेदः प्रजायते ।
मेदसोऽस्थि ततो मज्जा मज्ज्ञः शुक्रं तु जायते ॥

SuSam SūSthā XIV.10

From the serum blood is produced; from blood, flesh; from flesh fat is produced; from fat, bone; thence (is produced) the marrow. The semen is produced from the marrow.

The commentary on the above verses makes it clear that production of one *dhātu* from another is like the production of curd from milk. Further, *dhātus* are described as *dhātvāhāra* 'having *dhātu* as the food'.

धातवो हि धात्वाहाराः प्रकृतिमनुवर्तन्ते ।

CarSam SūSthā XXVIII.3

Dhātus are nourished by *dhātus*. Thus they continue their normalcy.

The growth and decay of *dhātu* is dependent upon the growth and decay of its antecedent *dhātu*:

पूर्वो धातुः परं कुर्याद् वृद्धः क्षीणश्च तद्विधम् ।

AṣṭH I.11.35ab

The growth and decay in the preceding element may cause the same (growth or decay) in the subsequent element.

The role of the *dhātus* in the process of metabolism is described by Caraka, as follows:

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सप्तभिर्देहधातारो धातवो द्विविधं पुनः ।
यथास्वमग्निभिः पाकं यान्ति किट्टप्रसादवत् ॥

CarSam CikSthā XV.15

The *dhātu*s which support the body in seven ways undergo twofold conversion into excretion and essence through coming in contact with the respective *agni* (body fire).

Among the several functions of the *dhātu*s that of producing a foetus is regarded the most important:

गर्भोत्पादश्च धातूनां श्रेष्ठं कर्म क्रमात्स्मृतम् ॥

AṣṭH I.11.4cd

Creation of a foetus is the function of the *dhātu*s the highest in the order (of functions).

It will be thus clear from the above discussion that *dhātu* is one of the central concept in the Āyurveda standing for the basic supporting element.

Buddhism

A still further widening of the semantic area of *dhātu* is noticed in the Buddhist literature consisting of both Pali and Sanskrit works. According to the *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* (by F. Edgerton), *dhātu* conveys as many as seven different meanings in Buddhism. These include the more general meanings such as the great elements (→*bhūta*) and the body elements (*śarīra dhātu*). The real contribution of Buddhism in the development of the concept of *dhātu* consists in its extension to the domain of the mind or consciousness. Firstly, →*viññāṇa* 'consciousness' is regarded as the sixth element in addition to the five great elements:

कतमा छ? पथवीधातु, आपोधातु, तेजोधातु, वायोधातु, आकासधातु, विञ्ञाणधातु - इमा खो, आवुसो, छ धातुयो तेन भगवता जानता पस्सता अरहता सम्मासम्बुद्धेन सम्मदक्खाता ।

MajNik III.31

What six? The element of extension, the element of cohesion, the element of radiation, the element of motion, the element of space, the element of consciousness. Your reverence, these six elements have been rightly pointed out by that Lord who knows and sees, perfected one, fully Self-Awakened One. (Tr. I.B. Horner)

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Secondly, the Buddhists speak of the eighteen *dhātus* which include the six sense organs, their objects, as well as their perceptions:

तत्थ कतमा अट्ठारस धातुयो ?

१. चक्खुधातु, २. रूपधातु, ३. चक्खुविञ्ञाणधातु, ४. सोतधातु, ५. सद्दधातु, ६. सोतविञ्ञाणधातु, ७. घानधातु, ८. गन्धधातु, ९. घानविञ्ञाणधातु, १०. जिह्वाधातु, ११. रसधातु, १२. जिह्वाविञ्ञाणधातु, १३. कायधातु, १४. फोट्ठब्बधातु, १५. कायविञ्ञाणधातु, १६. मनोधातु, १७. धम्मधातु, १८. मनोविञ्ञाणधातु - इमा वुच्चन्ति "अट्ठारस धातुयो" ।

Vibh XVIII.1.5 [401–402 (P.T.S)]

Therein what are the eighteen elements? 1. The eye element, 2. visible element, 3. eye-consciousness-element, 4. ear-element, 5. audible element, 6. ear-consciousness-element, 7. nose element, 8. odorous element, 9. nose-consciousness-element, 10. tongue element, 11. sapid element, 12. tongue-consciousness-element, 13. body element, 14. tangible element, 15. body-consciousness-element, 16. mind element, 17. ideational element, 18. mind-consciousness-element. These are called the eighteen elements. (Tr. P.A. Thiṭṭila)

In the above passage, *dhātu* refers to the psycho-physical constituents of the personality in relation to the outside world. The term is thus no more confined to the material constituents of the physical world. It is also used to denote the constituent element of the mind or, the mental character, or in wider sense, natural disposition. The Buddha is described as, for instance, being capable of understanding mental dispositions of different people. The world is described as consisting of a variety of mental dispositions:

नानाधातुकं लोकं विदन्ति ... ।

MVas I.159.2a

It is understood that the world consists of (people with) different dispositions.

The word *dhātu* appears as a final constituent of a number of compounds in the Buddhist literature, e.g. *avijjādhātu* 'the mental state of ignorance' and *pahāṇadhātu* 'the mental state of abandonment'. It is worth mentioning in this context that the connotations of the three terms *dhātu, khandha* and →*āyatana* sometimes overlap when they refer to mental states. Often these three forms appear together as the compound *skandhadhātvāyatanāni*, where *dhātu* denotes mental states. The meaning of *dhātu* further switches over from a mental state

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Figure 3: *Dhātu-mañjuṣā*, [from the excavation at Pipravah (Kapilavastu), Basti, U.P.] ca 4th Cent. B.C.

to a state of existence in general which is further generalised into the meaning 'domain' or 'region'. The Pali texts speak of three states of existence, namely, *kāmadhātu* 'element of desire', *rūpyadhātu* 'element of form' and *ārūpyadhātu* 'element of formlessness'. A further development takes place when *dhātu* alludes to 'mass' or 'abundance'. This can be noticed in a few compound expressions like *sattvadhātu*, 'large number of creatures'. Finally, an extension of the meaning of *dhātu* in the Āyurveda is also found in the Buddhist texts where it is used to denote the mortal remains of the Buddha, which are worshipped by his followers as relics.

कुर्वीत महतीं पूजां शास्तुर्धातुवरे भुवि ॥

MMK LIII part III (642)

One should perform the grand worship of the relics of the Lord on earth. (Tr. R.C. Sharma)

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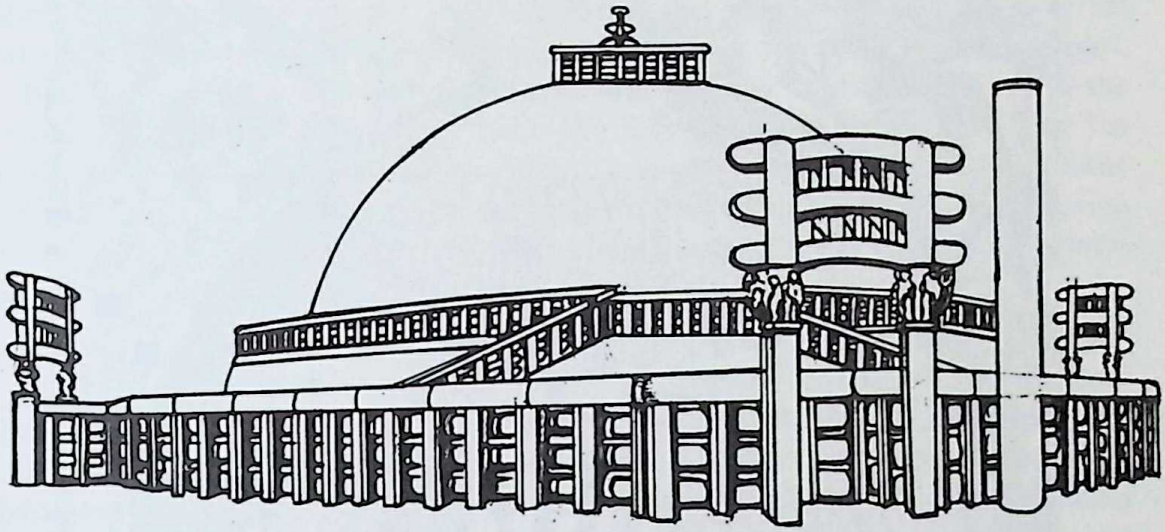

Figure 4: Sanchi *stūpa* No. 1, 1st Cent. B.C.

Dhātu is a favourite term used in the early Buddhist Architecture, particularly, with reference to the centre of the →*stūpa*. It was an early tradition to pick up some charred bones of the burnt body of a great man whether a *yogi* or a *cakravartin*, and put them inside a casket and this was known as *dhātu mañjuṣā*, i.e. the vessel containing with relic bones. We come across several references in the Buddhist literature where the distribution of the ashes of the Buddha after cremation has been mentioned and subsequently it was decided to build *stūpa*s in his honour. Since the ashes were collected from the *citā*, therefore the *stūpa* is sometimes known as →*caitya*. The ashes of Buddha were recovered in 1898 from a *stūpa* at Pipravah in the Basti distict on the Indo-Nepal border by the Pepe in the last century, while the bones were made over to the then King of Siyam (Thailand). The casket with instructions is preserved in Indian Museum, Calcutta. This was found along with other antiquities in a big stone box which is also housed in the Indian Museum. Another interesting discovery was one more *dhātu-mañjuṣā* made of crystal with a lid containing golden fish. The *stūpa* architecture depicts the relic caskets being an object of great reverence. Two more relic caskets were recovered by Sri K.M. Srivastava of the Archaeological Survey of India in the year 1971–72 and these are in the National Museum, New Delhi.

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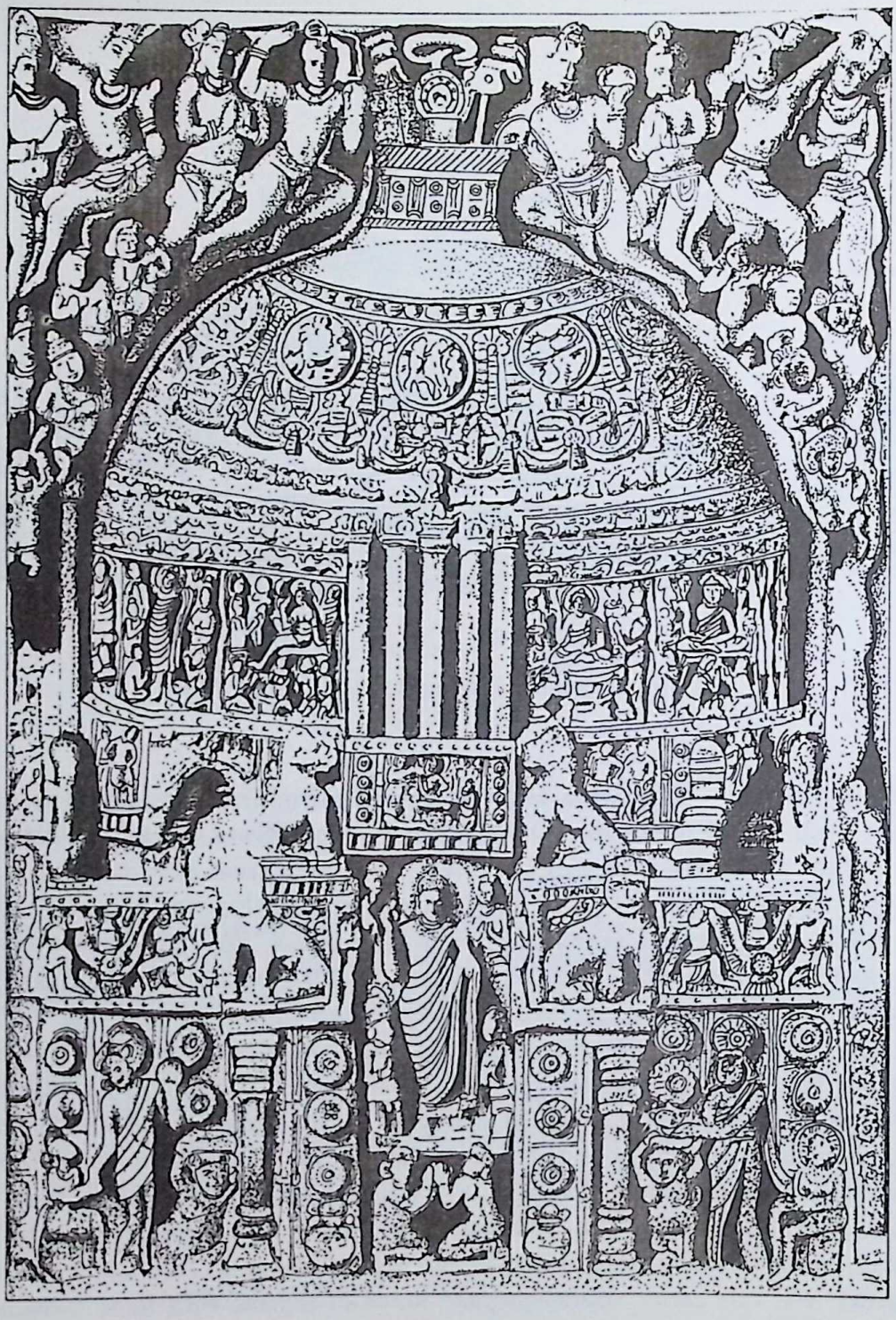

Figure 5: Depiction of a *stūpa*, Amaravati, ca 2nd Cent. A.D.

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Since the *stūpa*s were built on different body relics of the Buddha, the term *dhātu* was often used to refer to the *stūpa*.

The sanctification of the monument was centred on *dhātu* which could be physical elements or psychic constituents. In its wider connotation *dhātu* could also mean a bowl or robe of Lord Buddha or his hair and nail cuttings in his lift-time or his remains after *Nirvāṇa*, and later on the relics of his disciples, a Buddhist *sūtra* or *dhāraṇī* and images continued to be denoted through the symbolic meaning of the term. Even the foot prints of the Buddha are the symbols of *dhātu* as →*caitya*s were built over them. This is evident from the reference of *Dhātu-Cetiya* (enshringing the relics) occuring as one of the types of *caitya*s in the Pali literature (Kaliṅgabodhi Jātaka, Jātaka with commentary, Ed. V. Fausböll, Vol. IV, PTS, 1962).

The early →*stūpa* consisted of distinct parts. A simple hemispherical dome (*aṇḍa*) set upon a low platform was the main body of a *stūpa*. On top of the dome emerged a single pillar surrounded by circular disks (*chatrāvalī*). A square set of railings (*harmikā*) surrounded the pillar that represents the pivot of the universe (*axis mundi*) in Buddhist cosmology. The monument was consecrated by placing the sacred relic (*dhātu*) in the core of the monument. Thus the archaeological evidences together with the literaly evidences prove that the term *dhātugarbha* conveyes the meaning of the interior of a monument containing *dhātu*s (relics) (Mahāvaṃśa 179, 211; Divyāvadāna 369.1).

In the Mahāyāna sūtras the term *vajra* having been associated with the Buddha played a very prominent role. Subsequently much emphasis continued to be laid upon the term and thus the later school of Buddhism itself came to be known as Vajrayāna. The main characteristic of this school was that here the attention centred on the meditation (→*dhyāna*) and for an aid to meditation Buddhist *maṇḍala* (plan) was conceived that represented the Buddhist cosmology. *Vajradhātumaṇḍala* is a designation given to the principal *maṇḍala*, in the Vajrayāna school in which Sumeru is the *axis mundi*, on the top of Sumeru is sitting the main deity Vairocana – the Ādi Buddha. We also find *vajradhātu* interpreted as one of the *dhyānī* Buddhas. In the same context it is worthy to note that the same system (Vajrayāna) has conceptualized *stūpa* representing the five elements with particular forms of a square representing the earth; circle the water; triangle the fire; half moon the wind; and half circle the space, from bottom to top (Kalātattvakośa Vol. III, Fig. 7), because in the proess of meditation (*dhyāna*) one has to follow the five primordial essences in their development and finally reabsorbe them in oneself for final beatitude.

Even a cursory glance at the Buddhist literature shows that different lists of *dhātu*s consisting of three or four or six or eighteen *dhātu*s are found in different

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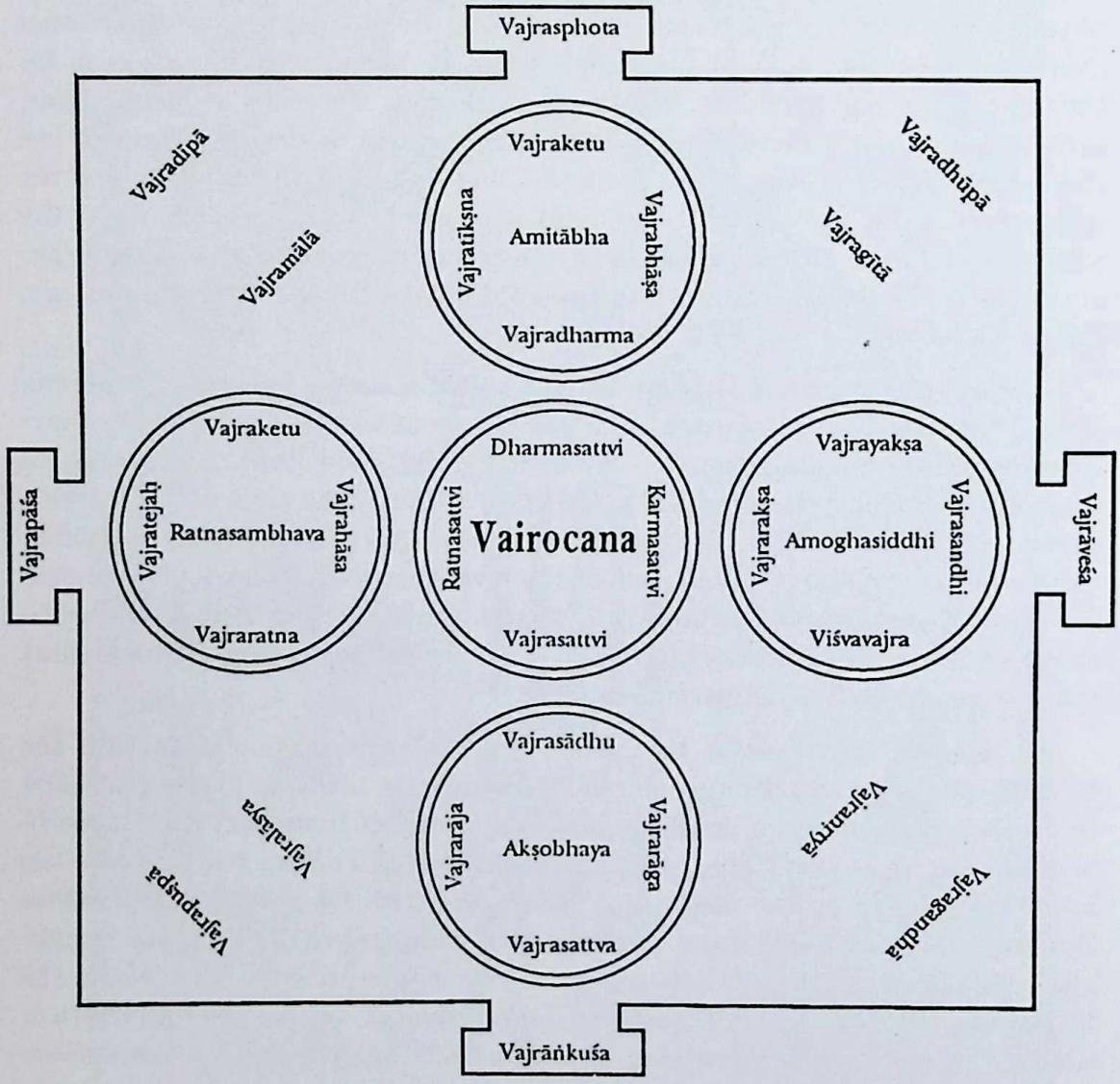

Figure 6: *Vajradhātumaṇḍala*

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texts. Although all these *dhātus* do not deviate much from the original meaning, namely, 'element', the technical nuances differ from list to list. Finally, it must be noted that the word *dhātu* is liberally used by the Buddhist philosophers to stand for whatever can be conceptualized as a fundamental element, either in general or in a specific context. In this connection the discussion on the meaning of *dhātu* in the **Abhidharma Samuccaya** is worth noting:

> धात्वर्थः कतमः । सर्वधर्म बीजार्थः । स्वलक्षणधारणार्थः । कार्यकारणभाव-धारणार्थः । सर्वप्रकारधर्मसंग्रहधारणार्थश्च ।
>
> AbhidhSamu I.5
>
> What is the meaning of element? It means the seed of all the *dharmas*, the possessor of its own nature, the possessor of the state of cause and effect, the owner of all the collection of the *dharmas*. (Tr. N.H. Samtani)

It is thus clear from the observations made above that in the Buddhist literature also *dhātu* refers to essence, or something fundamental to a certain concept.

Tantra-Āgama

In Tantra the seven syllables, namely, *y, r, l, v, ś, ṣ* and *s* are described as the seven *dhātus*, i.e. the body element (*rasa, rakta*, etc.) of the highest deity. For instance, in the **Īśānaśivagurudeva Paddhati** the seven syllables are described as the seven elements of the body of *viśvamātṛkā*.

> त्वगसृङ्मांसमेदोऽस्थि मज्जाशुक्राणि यादयः ॥
> धातवः सप्त वर्णाः स्युर्हकारः प्राण इष्यते ।
>
> ĪśGP I.64cd–65ab
>
> The seven syllables are the elements namely, skin, blood, flesh, fat, bone, marrow and semen, while the syllable *h* is the breath (of *viśvamātṛkā*).

> इन्द्रियं विषयं चैवेन्द्रियविज्ञानमेव च ।
> धातवोऽष्टादशाख्याता योगिनीनां तु बोधये ॥
> स्वभावमाद्यनुत्पन्नं न सत्यं न मृषा तथा ।
> उदकचन्द्रोपमं सर्वं योगिन्यो जानतेच्छया ॥
>
> HT II.3.35–36

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The eighteen spheres of consciousness are the six faculties and six spheres of sense together with the six kinds of consciousness belonging to each pair. Their nature is that of the essentially non-arisen and is neither true nor false, for all is like the reflection of the moon in water. O yoginīs, understand it as you will. (Tr. D.L. Snellgrove)

Manifestation in the Arts: Literature

In the Sanskrit literature the term *dhātu* is often used in the sense of a mineral, a metal in general or the red ochre or mercury in particular. The lexical works cite the following verse containing the list of *dhātus* 'metals', e.g.:

हिरण्यं रजतं कांस्यं ताम्रं सीसकमेव च ।
रङ्गमायसरैत्यं च धातवोऽष्टौ प्रकीर्तिताः ।

Vācaspatyam cites from Dānasāgara

There are eight metals. They are, gold, silver, bell metal, copper, lead, red ochre, iron and quicksilver.

The red metallic powder was used as a cosmetic in ancient India. It is referred to at a number of places in the Sanskrit poetry while describing the beauty of a young woman. The beauty of the trees on mountains full of the red metal is described in the **Mahābhārata**, as follows:

ते हेमविकचा भूयो युक्ताः पर्वतधातुभिः ।
व्यराजञ्शाखिनस्तत्र सूर्यांशुप्रतिरञ्जिताः ॥

MBh I.26.25

Those trees covered by the powder of mountain metal stone bright as gold when they were coloured by the rays of the Sun.

The sub-chapter on 'Dhātuvāda Rasāyana' of the **Mānasollāsa** (II.4.377–394), a well-known 12th century encyclopaedic work in Sanskrit deals with the practice of alchemy according to which ordinary people and members of the royal family would equally have recourse to the practice of alchemy.

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Dhātu in Music

by **Prem Lata Sharma**

In music, *dhātu* finds a place in three contexts– (i) the tonal and temporal dimensions in the rendering on *vīṇā* as well as fingering techniques, (ii) the tonal and rhythmic component of a musical composition, contradistinct from *mātu*, the textual component and (iii) the sections of a musical composition.

The concept of *dhātu* in the first context above that is the earliest one, is related to the construction of various forms of pots or ornaments from a metal that has already been purified as well as the formation of various forms of words from the 'purified' roots.

The second context referred to above, viz. the tonal and rhythmic structure of a composition bears relationship with the *dhātu* of Āyurveda that holds or sustains the body. The tonal and temporal organisation of a musical composition is its life-principle and the textual component (*mātu*) is the basis of measured units. Thus the roots *dhā-* (to hold) and *mā-* (to measure) are significant respectively. The same is the case with the third context, viz. sections of a composition. Here also the sections of a song hold or sustain the structure of the composition.

A brief account of the treatment of *dhātu* in the above three contexts is pertinent here. The first context occurs in the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** (XXIX.50-69). This term is not defined there. The four main varieties of *dhātu* have been named *vistāra*, →*karaṇa*, *āviddha* and *vyañjana*. *Vistāra* pertains to the combinations and permutations of one, two and three strokes on the *vīṇā* related to low and high (*uttara* and *adhara*) →*svaras* which make its first three varieties, the fourth one being a mixture of these three. The names of these varieties are *vistāraja* (one stroke), *saṅghātaja* (two strokes) having four sub-varieties, *samavāyaja* (three strokes) having eight sub-varieties and *anubandha* (mixed). *Karaṇa* and *āviddha* are the two varieties that pertain to the combinations and permutations of long and short strokes. *Karaṇa* has five varieties, wherein short strokes predominate and *āviddha*, also having five varieties, has the predominance of long strokes. *Vyañjana* is ten-fold, describing various fingering techniques. Thus *dhātus* are thirty-four in all–

> *vistāra* - 1+4+8+1=14, *karaṇa* - 5, *āviddha* - 5 and *vyañjana* - 10=34.

Later texts have reproduced these varieties without any addition or alteration.

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The above treatment of *dhātu* implicitly bears resemblance to the *dhātu* or root in grammar as can be seen below–

Grammar	Music
Two-fold groupings, viz. *parasmaipada – ātmanepada* or *tiṅ – kṛt* or *sārvadhātuka – ārdhadhātuka* (types of *tiṅ* formations)	Two elements, viz. high-low and long-short
Ten-fold grouping as: ten *lakāras* or ten *gaṇas*	Ten *vyañjanas*

Later authors have tried to see the relationship of this *dhātu* with that of Āyurveda (cf. the following definition of *dhātu* given by Śārṅgadeva):

पुष्णन्ति वीणावाद्यं ये रक्तिं दधति चातुलाम् ।
कुर्वन्त्यदुष्टपुष्टिं च तान् धातूनधुना ब्रुवे ॥

SR VI.121

I shall now speak of the *dhātus* that nourish the rendering on *vīṇā* and embody unique delightfulness and bestow faultless sustenance.

The second and third context of *dhātu* occur in post-**Nāṭya-Śāstra** texts, for example:

वाङ्मातुरुच्यते गेयं धातुरित्यभिधीयते ।

SMak IV.22ab (cf. SR III.2a and IV.7-12b)

Vāṅ (literary part of music) is termed as *mātu* (verbal structure), *geyam* (musical part) is named as *dhātu* (tonal structure).
(Tr. M. Vijayalakshmi)

The first of the above two references identifies *dhātu* with *geya*, i.e. that which is sung as contradistinct from *mātu* which is identified with →*vāk* that stands here for the textual component of a musical composition. The third context, viz. sections of a composition finds place in the second reference, as follows:

प्रबन्धावयवो धातुः स चतुर्धा निरूपितः ।
उद्ग्राहः प्रथमस्तत्र ततो मेलापकध्रुवौ ।

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आभोगश्चेति ... . ॥
ध्रुवाभोगान्तरे जातो धातुरन्योऽन्तराभिधः ।
स तु सालगसूडस्थरूपकेष्वेव दृश्यते ॥
वातपित्तकफा देहधारणाद्धातवो यथा ।
एवमेते प्रबन्धस्य धातवो देहधारणात् ॥
तत्र मेलापकाभोगौ न भवेतां क्वचित् क्वचित् ।
स द्विधातुस्त्रिधातुश्च चतुर्धातुरिति त्रिधा ॥

SR IV.7, 9–11

Dhātu is the limb or organ of *prabandha* (musical composition) and that has been described as being fourfold. *Udgrāha* (lit. the one that 'lifts' or begins) is the first one there and then are *melāpaka* (lit. that which unites), *dhruva* (lit. steady or constant) and *ābhoga* (lit. that which lasts till the end or as long as enjoyment takes place). There is another *dhātu* called *antarā* that finds place in between *dhruva* and *ābhoga* and that is seen only in the *rūpaka*s (another name for *prabandha*) of the *sālaga sūḍa* type. Just as *dhātu*s (in the human body) are known as such on account of holding or sustaining the body, similarly these are the *dhātu*s of *prabandha* on account of sustaining its body. Out of them (*dhātu*s) sometimes *melāpaka* and *ābhoga* do not find a place. That (*prabandha*) is of three types, viz. having two, three or four *dhātu*s.

In the above passage, the relationship with the *dhātu* in Āyurveda is explicit in the context of the sections of *prabandha.*

Thus we have seen that the earliest treatment of *dhātu* in music is implicitly related with the process of constructing forms with 'purified' minerals of metals as well as with the construction of words or verbal forms from the roots in grammar. The relationship with Āyurveda becomes explicit in later treatment.

Architecture

Dhātu denoting the meaning of colouring substances is one of the prescribed items used for foundation deposit. The **Mayamata** records a full description of the foundation deposit appropriate to temples of the different deities; houses of the members of the different *varṇa*s; different types of buildings and also for the construction of wells and hydraulic works. Foundation deposit is essential for the success of the constructions. A casket (*phela*) with compartments is the principal element of foundation deposit placed upon a bed of earths, roots and seeds in the course of a ceremony conducted by the architect:

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मृत्कन्दधान्यसल्लोह् धातुरत्नेन्द्रनीलाद्यैः ।
पणेन गर्भद्रव्याणि निर्दोषाण्येव सङ्गृहेत् ॥

Mayam IX.103

The greatest care must therefore be taken in the laying of a comprehensive deposit including earths, roots, grains, (grains represented in) metals, colouring substances (*dhātu*) and precious stones such as *indranīla* sapphire. The elements chosen for a deposit should be flawless and are to have been purchased. (Tr. B. Dagens)

..... विन्यसेद् गर्भभाजने ।
रत्नानि धातवश्चैव स्वस्वविस्तारभाजने ॥
तद्देवस्थानभावज्ञैरानीतानि निधापयेत् ।

Mayam IX.116–117ab

The responsibility for the arranging of precious stones and colouring substances (*dhātavaḥ*) each at its proper place in the casket should devolve upon those well acquainted with their nature and with the placing of gods. (Tr. B. Dagens)

रूपाण्यप्यौषधानि द्युतिमणि कनकाद्यष्टलोहानि धातून्
पात्रे न्यस्याञ्जनादीन् शुभयुतदिनपक्षर्क्षहोरामुहूर्ते ।
मृत्कन्दान्यष्टधान्यानि च निशि मतिमान् श्वभ्रमूले निधाय
क्षिप्त्वा पात्राय युक्त्या बलिमथ सलिले स्थापयेद् गर्भमादौ ॥

Mayam XII.112

When all is auspicious: the day, the fortnight, the planets, the time and the moment, the sage first of all arranges in the casket the images, the medicinal plants, the glittering gems, the eight metals such as gold (... etc.), the eight colouring substances (*dhātu*) such as antimony. Then, at night, the earths, the roots and the eight grains are installed at the bottom of the pit. Then, in the morning, after making an offering to the casket according to the rituals, he installs the foundation deposit in water. (Tr. B. Dagens)

In the description of placing the deposit a list of colouring substances (*dhātu*) is given as under:

ईशादिषु न्यसेदेतान्यष्टदिक्षु यथाक्रमम् ।
जयन्ते जातिहिङ्गुल्यं हरितालं भृशे मतम् ॥
मनःशिला च वितथे भृङ्गराजे तु माक्षिकम् ।
राजावर्ते तु सुग्रीवे शोषे गैरिकमीरितम् ॥

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अञ्जनं गणमुख्ये स्यादुदितौ दरदं विदुः ।

Mayam XII.25–27ab

The placing of the grains is to be done with care in the given order to the eight directions beginning with that of Īśa (in the north-east).

It is known that (next) cinnabar is put in (the compartment of) Jayanta, in (that of) Bhṛśa orpiment, in (that of) Vitatha red arsenic, in (that of) Bhṛṅgarāja red chalk, in (that of) Sugrīva lapis lazuli, in (that of) Śoṣa hematite, in (that of) Gaṇamukhya antimony and in (that of) Uditi red copper. (Tr. B. Dagens)

In the **Mayamata** the word *dhātu* is also used in the sense of numerical value of five for the five →*bhūtas* are also called *dhātu*:

चन्द्रदृक्शशिशिवांशकै रसैर्धातुभिश्च समभागिकैः क्रमात् ।
वाजनं प्रतिमुखं त्रियश्रकं दृक् च वृत्तकुमुदं तु वप्रकम् ॥

Mayam XIV.21

(The height of the base) is divided into eighteen equal parts: the top fillet takes up one part, the upper string-course two, a champfered fillet one, a talon (?) three, the well rounded torus six and the plinth five. (Tr. B. Dagens)

In the same text, the numerical value is also seven denoted by the word *dhātu*, for there are seven *dhātus* in the body:

हर्म्यतारत्रिभागैकं भूतांशेषु गुणांशकम् ।
धातुभागे युगांशः स्याद् बाणांशं नवभागिके ॥
रुद्रांशे रसभागं तु धातु त्रयोदशांशके ।
तिथ्यंशे वसुभागं तु सप्तदश नवांशकम् ॥
विस्तारार्धं तु ते सर्वे नालीगृहविशालताः ।

Mayam XIX.13–15ab

Here are all the possible widths for the sanctum calculated from the width of the temple: one third, three fifths, four sevenths, five ninths, six elevenths, seven thirteenths, eight fifteenths, nine seventeenths or one half. (Tr. B. Dagens)

(also cf. Mayam XXV.43; XXVII.37; and XXXIII.47.)

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Process

The word *dhātu* has been used in Vedic literature, in various philosophical discourses, such as Buddhist and Brahmanic as well as in Grammar, in languages, in Āyurveda and even in arts, i.e. literature, music, and architecture.

In the Vedic literature *dhātu* means material, be it a lump of soil, or *darbha*-blade of a *kuśa* grass or grass strand. While using the word *dhātu* as material sometimes it has been used as material, having joints. In the **Āpastamba-Śrauta-Sūtra**, *tridhātu, pañcadhātu*, have been used as materials having three joints or five joints.

Dhātu in common usage is understood as metals, i.e. gold, silver, copper, etc. In some cases mineral products are also mentioned as *dhātu.*

In the **Viṣṇu-Sahasranāma Bhāṣya** (18), *dhātu* means the →*cit* which sustains the universe of cause and effect.

Dhātu is a technical term for grammarians. They have coined this term for words expressing verbal roots. In grammar a *dhātu* is sometimes called →*prakṛti* also.

Dhātu in Āyurveda means the constituent elements of the body. As *dhātu* can be derived from the verbal root *dhā-* which means to hold or to support, the word is extensively used as constituent elements of the body and the visible world.

Dhātu is one of the fundamental categories of Buddhist philosophy, though the mortal remains of the Buddha and corporal relics of saints are also meant by the term *dhātu.*

In the **Abhidharma Samuccaya** it is mentioned that *dhātu* or the element is that which possesses its own nature.

In Tantra the term denotes the body element of the highest deity. In the **Mahābhārata** and later in the **Mānasollāsa** the use of the term *dhātu* has been made to denote the meaning of various minerals.

In music, *dhātus* are those techniques or patterns that nurture the rendering on the *vīṇā* and are the repositories of delight or colourfulness. In the **Saṅgīta-Makaranda**, *dhātu* is known as that by which the sweetness of speech is expressed. In the Architecture *dhātu* denotes the meaning of colouring substances used for foundation deposits. *Dhātu* also denotes the numerical value of five and seven in such works.

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Conclusion

From the above discussion, it can be clearly established that the implication of the word *dhātu* is very rich. Though the word has got various meanings in different disciplines but basically it represents an omni-present, all pervading basic element or ingredient.

Therefore, the term *dhātu* stands for one of the basic concepts in Indian art and culture.

Saroja Bhate
Sanghamitra Basu

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GUṆA-DOṢA

Overview

The term *guṇa* (m.) denotes a comprehensive concept in the various branches of Sanskrit literature with its many technical and non-technical senses. It is usually employed as a technical term in the metaphysics of Sāṃkhya and Vaiśeṣika, in grammar, poetics (Alaṅkāra-Śāstra) and politics (Artha-Śāstra). The various technical meanings of the same word *guṇa* in different schools of thought may not appear to be necessarily related to one another although, they have some connection with their basic non-technical senses. It is non-technical in the sense of thread, string, rope, cord, in the popular sense of quality, excellence, virtue and in the sense of a subordinate thing. Even in the sense of part, repetition, fold, times, etc. *guṇa* is a non-technical term.

In Vedic and other literature the term *guṇa* is used in its non-technical sense of 'thread', 'string', alongwith the popular sense of 'quality' or 'fold', 'times', etc.

As a technical term (*saṃjñā*), *guṇa* denotes (i) the vowels *a* (with *ar, al*), *e* and *o*, the first gradation of a vowel in the grammar of Paninian school; (ii) the six subdivisions of action for a king in state policy (viz. peace, war, march, halt, stratagem and recourse to the protection of a mightier king) in the Artha-Śāstra; (iii) excellences in poetics and dramaturgy; (iv) an ingredient or constituent of →*prakṛti*, primal substance of all internal and external things (viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) in Sāṃkhya philosophy; (v) a property or characteristic of all kinds of things, numbering twenty-four, viz. *rūpa, rasa*, etc. in Vaiśeṣika system.

In Buddhism, the term *guṇa* indicates the non-technical sense of meanings, a string or cord of robe, fold, times, quality, virtue, etc. In Jainism, *guṇa* is not used in any of the aforesaid technical senses. It is neither substantial as Samkhyan *guṇa*s, nor adventitious or evanescent as Vaiśeṣika *guṇa*s. It is one of the three inherent qualities of every *pudgala* (sentient being, *jīva*). Each smallest unit of matter is a substance (→*dravya*) possessing certain kinds of features (*guṇa*s) that are presented in various modes (*paryāya*s).

In Tantric system *guṇatattva* exists between the *buddhitattva* and *prakṛti*, the equilibrium of all the *guṇa*s. At the time of creation, the will of the Lord causes disturbance in *prakṛti*. This imbalance is known as *guṇatattva*. The three *guṇa*s (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) are in the state of equilibrium during *pralaya*.

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All the philosophical and religious traditions of India (leaving Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Pūrvamīmāṃsā) speak of three *guṇa*s, viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. They were regarded as the three *varga*s of *mokṣa* (emancipation) in the **Māhābhārata** (*mokṣasyāsti trivargo'nyaḥ tamaḥ sattvaṃ rajastathā* – XII.59.31). The assertion of the **Gītā** (XVIII.40) that 'there is nothing in the whole mundane existence which is not made up of the three *guṇa*s, shows the glorious position of the *guṇa*-theory. In the sense of *indriya* (sense organ) *guṇa* is found in the lexicons only.

In Āyurveda, in the two Mīmāṃsā philosophies, in the Smṛtis, in the Epics and Purāṇas and in the sectarian philosophies *guṇa* is used in the Samkhyan sense and also in the sense of quality or attribute, dependent, etc. In Jyotiṣa and Gaṇita, *guṇa* is used to denote multiplication.

In śāstras like Saṅgīta, Kāma, Ratna, etc. *guṇa* is used in the wellknown sense of quality, attribute, excellence, qualification, virtue and the like. In discussions on subtle philosophical matters these śāstras are found to use *guṇa* in the Samkhyan sense.

In the Śilpa-Śāstra the term *guṇa* conveys the sense of line which is actually the extension of the primary sense of rope, string, etc. besides the other meanings like quality, multiplication, etc.

Etymology and Related Words

According to Yāska, the term *guṇa* is derived from the root *gaṇa-* 'to count', 'to enumerate', 'to reckon', etc. (*gaṇo gaṇanād guṇaśca* – Nir VI.36). It is clear from Durgācārya's commentary that *guṇa* here expresses the sense of counting (*guṇo'pi gaṇanādeva, asāvapi hi gaṇyata eva dviguṇaḥ, triguṇa iti*). In the words *dviguṇa* (twice, twofold), and *triguṇa* (thrice, threefold), *guṇa* expresses the sense of counting, which is also a kind of repetition.

Grammarians derive the term *guṇa* from the root *guṇa-* (*curādi*) meaning *āmantraṇa* (addressing). Kṣīrasvāmin, the commentator of the **Dhātupāṭha**, explains *āmantraṇa* by *gūḍhokti* (X.278), to speak secretly. Nāgeśa, a commentator of the **Mahābhāṣya**, while explaining the example '*bahuguṇā rajjuḥ*' (Mahābh VI.2.17) remarks that *guṇa* here means *avayava* (component parts) and derives the term from the root *guṇa-* meaning *āmantraṇa*.

The commentators of the lexicons also derive the term *guṇa* from the root *gūṇa-* meaning '*āmantraṇa*' or '*abhyāsa*'. For example, Bhānujī Dīkṣita derives it (while commenting on AmKo III.3.47) as '*guṇa āmantraṇe*' with the suffix *ghañ* (Pā III.3.19). Rāyamukuṭa in his commentary **Padacandrikā** on the

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Amara Kośa explains the term *guṇa* meaning cook as: *guṇayanti abhyasyanti randhanādikaṃ guṇāḥ* (II.601).

South-Indian commentators of the **Amara Kośa** also derive *guṇa* (meaning thread etc.) from the root *guṇa-* in the sense of repetition (*abhyāsa*) e.g. *gunyate abhyasyate ... guṇa abhyāse* (cf. comm. Amarapadavivṛti by Liṅgayasūrin on AmKo II.10.27); *guṇayaṇti punaḥ punaḥ pākamāvartayanti* (II.9.28). The *vivaraṇa* commentary of Appayarya (on AmKo III.1.88) also refers to the root *guṇa-* in the sense of *abhyāsa* (*guṇitā hate* – two words meaning multiplied).

Mallinātha, a Telugu commentator, explains the root *guṇa-* in the sense of *āmreḍana* (repetition), while commenting on the word *guṇanīkā* in the **Śiśupālavadha** (II.27).

The word *guṇa* as 'appropriate part' (*sama avayava*) is mentioned in the **Mahābhāṣya** (V.1.119). As an *avayava* is always repeated to form a whole, the root *guṇa-* (from which the word *guṇa* is derived) must originally have the sense *abhyāsa* (*āmreḍana*).

The Kātantra school reads the root *guna-* with dental *na* in the sense of *āmantraṇa*. In the **Dhātupāṭha** of Kāśakṛtsna the root is read with the meaning *āmantraṇa*, which is explained by the commentators as: *abhimukhaṃ bhūtvā vārtākaraṇe* (to talk facing somebody) and we also find there the words like *guṇayati* (he multiplies), *guṇayan* (while multiplying), *guṇanam, guṇanīyam* and *guṇakam* (said to be associated with *guṇana*, counting) taking the root in the sense of *āmantraṇa*.

Subsequently *āmantraṇa* seems to have lost its earlier sense, but since the word was present in the **Dhātupāṭha** our commentators used this root in the sense of *āmantraṇa* (i.e. addressing, calling, etc.) unhesitatingly while deriving the word *guṇa* meaning thread etc.

Some words derived from the root *guṇa-* with primary suffix are as follows: *guṇaka* 'a calculator or the number which multiplies' (*guṇyate'neneti guṇakaḥ*)', *guṇita* 'the number which is multiplied', *guṇana* 'multiplication', 'repetition', *guṇanīya* 'capable of being multiplied or counted', *guṇya* 'that which is to be multiplied' (*yaśca guṇyate sa guṇyaḥ*).

Some other words derived from the word *guṇa* with secondary suffixes are: *Gauṇika*– One who reads or knows *guṇa*; here *guṇa* evidently stands for a book dealing with the grammatical technical term *guṇa* (i.e. *a*, *e* and *o*).

Guṇin and *guṇavat*– Possessing qualities. In Nyāya school, these words are chiefly used in the sense of →*dravya* (substance). Similarly *guṇin* is used to refer to God as is found in the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad** (*guṇī sarvavidyaḥ* – VI.2, *guṇa* stands for divine qualities).

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Gauṇa– The figurative sense of a word is called *gauṇa*. Literally it means 'coming from the qualities' (*guṇādāgato gauṇaḥ*). Thus *gauṇa artha* would mean 'the intended meaning of a word, which is derived from the attributes or characteristics of the object to which the word refers.' An apt example of the *gauṇa artha* is the sentence *'siṃho māṇavakaḥ'* (the boy is a lion). In this example, the qualities such as bravery etc. that the lion possesses are ascribed to the boy and as such the boy is called a lion.

. Some words formed with the word *guṇa*:

Dviguṇa; triguṇa – Twofold, twice; threefold, thrice.

Guṇakārtsnya – It occurs in the **Aṣṭādhyāyī** of Pāṇini (VI.2.93). It means 'the presence of only one quality' (*yatra hi guṇāntarābhāvaḥ tatra guṇakārtsnyam*, commentary Śabdenduśekhara). The word *praguṇa* denoting many threads is used in the **Saundaryalaharī** (69) *'praguṇaguṇasaṃkhyā-pratibhuvaḥ'*. Others are: *ekottaraguṇa* (a thing having one additional quality), *saguṇa* (a thing existing with *guṇa*s), *mahāguṇa* (great qualities) (cf. BhāgPur I.16.29), *nirguṇa* (devoid of qualities), *viguṇa* (bereft of qualities or defective); *aviguṇa* (having no defect or deficiency (BŚrSū II.3); *adhiguṇa* (possessing superior qualities) (cf. Megh 6); *anuguṇa* (*guṇam anugataḥ*, agreeable, suitable).

Guṇavacana – It is a qualifying adjective showing some quality (*guṇopasarjanadravyavācinaḥ*), like *paṭu* (able), *mṛdu* (mild), etc.

Layers of Meaning

The term *guṇa* has many layers of meaning. In the non-technical sense it refers to a 'thread' a continuation. In its extended meaning it alludes to attributes, qualities, the acts of repetition, practice and multiplication.

There is a remarkable discussion on the initial meaning of the word *guṇa* in the **Mahābhāṣya**.

> गुणशब्दोऽयं बहुवर्थः । अस्त्येव समेषु अवयवेषु वर्तते – तद् यथा द्विगुणा रज्जुः त्रिगुणा रज्जुरिति । अस्ति द्रव्यपदार्थकः । तद् यथा गुणवानयं देश इत्युच्यते, यस्मिन् गावः सस्यानि च वर्तन्ते । अस्त्यप्राधान्ये वर्तते । तद् यथा यो यत्राप्रधानं भवति स आह – गुणभूता वयमत्रेति । अस्त्याचारे वर्तते । तद् यथा गुणवानयं ब्राह्मण इत्युच्यते, यः सम्यगाचारं करोति । अस्ति संस्कारे वर्तते । तद् यथा संस्कृतमन्नं गुणवदित्युच्यते ।
>
> Mahābh V.1.119

The word *guṇa* has many meanings. It means equal parts as is found

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in the sentence *dviguṇā rajjuḥ* (a twofold rope), *triguṇa rajjuḥ* (a threefold rope).

It means substance, as is found in the sentence *guṇavānayaṃ deśaḥ* (this country possesses *guṇa*s, i.e. things like cows, corns, etc.). It means subordinate or secondary, as is found in the sentence *guṇabhūtā vayam* (we are subordinate) which is said by a person who is not the chief. It means good conduct, as is found in the sentence *guṇavānayaṃ brāhmaṇaḥ*, which refers to a Brahmin who performs duties perfectly. It means refinement or good quality; refined food is called *guṇavat.*

After giving these meanings of the word *guṇa* Patañjali states that in all of these examples *guṇa* essentially signifies 'equal or similar parts' (*sameṣu avayaveṣu*).

In *dviguṇam adhyayanam* (the twofold recitation of the Veda), the two parts of the recitation of the Veda are the Saṃhitāpāṭha and the Padapāṭha of the Veda. Although the parts are not exactly equal, yet they may be conceived to be so on account of their similarities.

Further in '*guṇavānayaṃ deśaḥ*' (this country possesses good qualities, i.e. desired valuable things) the things namely cows, crops and the like are deemed as parts of the country directly or indirectly as they exist in the country.

Similarly in '*guṇabhūtā vayam*' the speaker regards himself as remaining under some more powerful person and so he may be deemed as a part belonging to a whole.

Again in *guṇavānayaṃ brāhmaṇaḥ* (this Brahmin possesses virtues), *guṇa* stands for *ācāra* (good conduct), which is only a portion of all those virtues which fall under the field of brahminhood.

It is established here that though *guṇa* is used in many senses, namely *sama avayava* (equal or similar parts), *dravya* (substance), *aprādhānya* (subordinate or secondary), *ācāra* (good conduct), and *saṃskāra* (refinement or good quality), yet the last four senses can be derived from the first sense of equal or similar part (*sameṣu avayaveṣu*). *Sama* here does not mean equal or similar, but appropriate, reasonable.

All other meanings of *guṇa* as recorded in the lexicons are derived from the above senses. Thus, we can say that the external and internal qualities are *guṇa*s, since they are *apradhāna* (i.e. *āśrita*) to something else. As for example colour is a *guṇa* as it is invariably related to some substance. A thread is called *guṇa* as it is a whole made up of many strings which are to be regarded as

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*avayava*s. Multiplication is called *guṇa* or *guṇana*, for in the traditional process of multiplication, addition is done repeatedly. Repetition is to be regarded as of appropriate parts. Since combination of many parts forms a whole, the sense of repetition is derived from the original sense of part. The sense 'part' seems to give rise to the sense of 'constituent'. This may be the reason for coining the word *guṇa* for the ultimate material cause (in the Sāṃkhya philosophy). The reason for coining the word *guṇa* in the Alaṅkāra-Śāstra and Artha-Śāstra is the dependence of *mādhurya* and other poetical excellences on *rasa* and the dependence of policies like *sandhi* etc. on the king.

The use of the word *guṇa* as recorded in the lexicons of **Amara, Haima, Medinī, Maṅkha,** and in the **Nānārthārṇava**, etc. and also in the commentaries on some of these works is given below:

(a) things like thread, string, rope, organ, form, part, *mahābhūta*, vessel and substance,

(b) qualities – external as colour etc. and internal as bravery, learning, etc., excellence, refinement, favour, help and conduct,

(c) actions like renunciation, enjoyment and repetition,

(d) designations like cook,

(e) showing relation – like subordinate, secondary, qualification (*viśeṣaṇa*) and anti-blemish, and

(f) proper names like Bhīma.

Development of the Concept

It may be noted that the word *guṇa*, so popular in classical Sanskrit literature, has not been used in the Saṃhitās before the **Atharvaveda** and the **Taittirīya Saṃhitā**. Even the rare occurence of the term in the **Atharvaveda** is of doubtful meaning. The passage reads:

पुण्डरीकं नवद्वारं त्रिभिर्गुणेभिरावृतम् ।
तस्मिन् यद् यक्षमात्मन्वत् तद् वै ब्रह्मविदो विदुः ॥

AV X.8.43

There is a lotus which has nine gates or holes that is covered with three *guṇa*s. There exists inside the lotus a venerable entity possessing selfhood which is known to the *brahmavid*.

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Some scholars are of the opinion that the word *guṇa* here means 'a string' or 'a strand'. Others maintain that it means fold or times. This *mantra* is enigmatic and as such the meaning of the word *guṇa* is difficult to determine. It must be admitted that neither the significance of the *mantra* nor the import of the word *guṇa* is known clearly. *Navadvāra* usually refers to the human body (cf. *navadvāre pure dehī* – ŚvUp III.18 and BhG V.13). It is more reasonable to think that in the *mantra* the body has been conceived as a lotus, which suggests the glorious or dignified position of the body. The body is said to be *āvṛta* (covered, concealed) by three *guṇa*s.

Though some light is thrown on the significance of *tribhirguṇebhiḥ* in the **Atharvaveda** (X.2.32ab) itself elsewhere as: '*tasmin hiraṇyaye kośe tryare tripratiṣṭhite*' (second half in both these *mantra*s being identical), yet nothing can be said definitely as the intended sense of *tryara* and *tripratiṣṭhita* is still to be determined. It is however, quite clear that in this *mantra*, *guṇa* must be such an entity which has three varieties (aspects or members).

From the above meanings, it is quite reasonable to take *guṇa* in the well known sense of attribute or quality. It is also justified to think that since *puṇḍarīka* (i.e. *hṛdaya*, heart) is seated in the body which has nine gates or doors, it is figuratively called *navadvāra*. Thus *navadvāra puṇḍarīka* means a compound of mind and body, in other words, 'the living body'. This compound is covered by the three states, viz. *jāgrat, svapna* and *suṣupti*, or by →*sukha, duḥkha* and *moha*, or by →*rāga, dveṣa* and *bhaya* as propounded by the ancient teachers. It is needless to say that all of these (*jāgrat* etc.) may reasonably be regarded as *guṇa*s (qualities, attributes).

It is important to note here that the relation of the living body with the three entities is an established fact in Āyurveda. In this śāstra the body is conceived as *tristhūṇa* (having three *sthūṇa*s, i.e. posts, pillars), viz. *vāta, pitta* and *kapha* (Ḍalhaṇa's comm. on SuSam SūSthā XXI). This conception may be in consonance with the nature of the **Atharvaveda**, of which Āyurveda is regarded as an Upaveda.

Guṇa is mentioned in the **Taittirīya Saṃhitā** in the sense of thread:

यथा गुणे गुणमन्वस्यत्येवमेव तल्लोके लोकमन्वस्यति ... ।

TSam VII.2.4.2

As a man casts thread on thread, so he casts world on world....
(Tr. A.B. Keith)

The word *guṇa*, used twice in the first part of the passage, invariably means the same thing. Now this 'thing' cannot be other than thread as may be clearly

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known from the finite verb *anvasyati* (*anu* with the root *as-*, to throw).

In the **Gopatha Brāhmaṇa** the word *guṇita* is found in the passage:

स चासु संभूतस्त्रेधा विहृतः प्राणोऽपानो व्यान इति । ततोऽन्यत्र गुणितः ।

GoBr II.3.7

He (vital breath) is placed in these and is divided into three forms, viz. *prāṇa, apāna* and *vyāna*. In connection with things other than these, he gets multiplied (*guṇitaḥ*).

In the **Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa** the term *guṇa* denotes a subsidiary element of the Vedic ritual. For example, a passage in this text discusses whether the omission of the interjections '*vauṣaṭ*' and '*oṃ*' is permissible. Śvetaketu quoted as an authority says 'the omission of a *guṇa*, (a subsidiary element of the ritual) [is not a defect]' (cf. *guṇalopa iti śvetaketuḥ* – ŚāṅkhBr XXVI.4).

The word *guṇin* occurs in the **Sāmavidhāna Brāhmaṇa**. Here *guṇa* is used in the wellknown sense of a quality (II.6.7). In the words *guṇībhavati* (II.5.3, 6) and *guṇībhūta* (III.7.3) *guṇa* stands for *apradhāna*.

Curiously enough, the word *guṇa*, despite its being rare in the earlier Vedic texts, becomes so popular afterwards that a teacher is called Guṇākhya in the **Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka**:

गुणाख्याच्छाङ्खायनादस्माभिरधीतम् ।

ŚāṅkhĀr XV.1

We have studied from a teacher named Guṇākhya Śāṅkhāyana, i.e. a member of the *Śaṅkha* clan.

In the **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** the word *guṇa* denotes a 'strand' or a 'manifold'. In the following description of the ropes that fasten the planks of the swing used in the Mahāvrata ceremony, the term *guṇa* is compounded with the numbers *dvi* and *tri* to mean 'twofold' and 'threefold':

... रज्जुभ्यामूर्ध्वमुद्वयति दक्षिणतो दक्षिणयोत्तरतः सव्यया दार्भ्ये त्रिगुणे स्यातां सव्यदक्षिणे पञ्चव्यायामे द्विगुणे ... ।

AitĀr V.1.3

He (the sacrificer) fastens (the planks) above by means of the ropes, the right one on the south, the left on the north. The ropes should be of *darbha* grass, and with three strands (*triguṇa*), one rope to the left, one to the right, and five fathoms long, and should be folded double (*dviguṇa*). (Tr. A.B. Keith)

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In the **Taittirīya Āraṇyaka** the idea of three *guṇa*s can be traced in the following verse:

अजामेकां लोहितशुक्लकृष्णां बह्वीं प्रजां जनयन्तीं सरूपाम् ।
अजो ह्येको जुषमाणोऽनुशेते जहात्येनां भुक्तभोगामजोऽन्यः ॥

TĀr X.10.1 (cf. ŚvUp IV.5)

One he-goat (the birthless individual soul), indeed, while enjoying sleeps with one she-goat (the birthless Nature), which has red, white and black colours and which gives birth to many offsprings of its own kind. Another he-goat (individual soul) leaves her when she has been enjoyed. (Tr. Gambhirananda)

According to the comment of Sāyaṇācārya *ajā* refers to *mūla-prakṛti*. Since this *prakṛti* is nothing but the three *guṇa*s (in the Samkhyan sense) and in so far as the commentator interprets these three words, *lohita* (red), *śukla* (white) and *kṛṣṇa* (black) stand for the *rajas, sattva* and *tamas guṇa*s, the aforesaid verse must be taken as referring to *triguṇa*s.

In the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad** *guṇa* denotes the fivefold quality of →*yoga* (II.12), the quality of all the senses (III.17), *svaguṇa*: those who followed after meditation and abstraction saw the self power of God hidden in his own qualities (I.3).

In the Upaniṣads, we also find the use of the word *guṇa* to denote the three qualities as in the following passage from the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad**:

गुणान्वयो यः फलकर्मकर्ता कृतस्य तस्यैव स चोपभोक्ता ।
स विश्वरूपस्त्रिगुणस्त्रिवर्त्मा प्राणाधिपः संचरति स्वकर्मभिः ॥
अङ्गुष्ठमात्रो रवितुल्यरूपः संकल्पाहंकारसमन्वितो यः ।
बुद्धेर्गुणेनात्मगुणेन चैव आराग्रमात्रो ह्यवरोऽपि दृष्टः ॥

ŚvUp V.7–8

He who is endowed with the attributes, who is a performer of action leading to a result, and is himself the enjoyer of the result of that very action which has been done, he has many forms, is possessed of the three qualities, has three paths, is the master of the vital force, and moves by his own actions.

That which is of the size of a thumb and has a brightness like the sun, which is associated with determination and egoism, as also with the qualities of the intellect and the qualities of the body, and which is like the tip of a goad, is seen as though different (from Brahman). (Tr. Gambhirananda)

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Here *triguṇa* stands for the three constituents of nature – purity (*sattva*), passion (*rajas*) and darkness (*tamas*). Again, the three paths (*trivartman*) are duty and moral conduct (→*dharma*), a-moral or immoral (*adharma*) and knowledge (→*jñāna*).

The concept of three qualities is indicated in the following passage:

तमेकनेमिं त्रिवृतं षोडशान्तं ... ।

ŚvUp I.4a

They saw Him as having one rim, three tiers, sixteen ends, ...
(Tr. Gambhirananda)

Here *trivṛta* means consisting of the three qualities *sattva* (purity), *rajas* (passion) and *tamas* (darkness). *Ṣoḍaśānta* denotes the five elements (→*bhūtas*), the five organs of perception (*buddhīndriya*), the five organs of action (*karmendriya*) and the mind (→*manas*).

The one, Creator, in and over the world, is intelligent, the author of time, possessor of qualities, and omniscient (*jñaḥ kālakālo guṇī sarvavidyaḥ* – ŚvUp VI.2b).

The Supreme Lord's works are connected with good qualities:

आरभ्य कर्माणि गुणान्वितानि भावांश्च सर्वान् विनियोजयेद्यः ।
तेषामभावे कृतकर्मनाशः कर्मक्षये याति स तत्त्वतोऽन्यः ॥

ŚvUp VI.4

He begins with works which are connected with qualities (*guṇa*),
And distributes all existences (*bhāva*).
In the absence of these (qualities) there is a disappearance of the work that has been done.
[Yet] in the destruction of the work he continues essentially other [than it]. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the **Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad** *guṇa* is used in the Samkhyan sense only in the expressions: *prākṛtair guṇaiḥ* – '*guṇa*s born of *prakṛti*' (III.2); it speaks of *tāmasa* characteristics like fear, sleep and *rājasa* characteristics like desire, greed, etc. (III.5); the agitated state of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* (V.2).

Referring to the soul that is subject to elements and qualities, confused and self-conceited, suffers and reincarnates, *prākṛtaguṇa* is mentioned:

स वा एषोऽभिभूतः प्राकृतैर्गुणैरिति ।

MaitUp III.2

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This (elemental soul), verily, is overcome by Nature's (*prakṛti*) qualities (*guṇa*).

In the context of the applications of the food-principle *triguṇa* is said to be enjoyable:

पुरुषश्चेता प्रधानान्तःस्थः । स एव भोक्ता प्राकृतमन्नं भुङ्क्ता इति । तस्यायं भूतात्मा ह्यन्नम् । अस्य कर्ता प्रधानः । तस्मात् त्रिगुणं भोज्यम् । भोक्ता पुरुषोऽन्तःस्थः ।

MaitUp VI.10

The conscious person stands in the midst of Matter (*pradhāna*). He is an enjóyer, for he enjoys the food of Nature (*prakṛti*). Even this elemental soul (*bhūtātman*) is food for him; its maker is Matter. Therefore, that which is to be enjoyed consists of the three Qualities (*guṇa*) and the enjoyer is the person who stands in the midst.
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

In the context of the liberation through the renunciation of all desires, mental activity and self consiousness, the nature of *guṇa* is defined as:

अत्रैका आहुः । गुणः प्रकृतिभेदवशादध्यवसायात्मबन्धमुपागतः ।

MaitUp VI.30

On this point some say: "It is a quality (*guṇa*) which by force of the developing differentiation of Nature (*prakṛti*) comes to bind the self with determination (and the like), and that liberation results from the destruction of the fault of determination (and the like)".
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

In course of defining the soul (*ātman*) as the world-sun and its rays, the *ātman* is described as devoid of qualities (*nirguṇāt*), brilliant and enjoying qualities (*bhāsvaro guṇabhuk*) (MaitUp VII.1).

In the **Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya** *guṇa* is used to denote the technical sense of *e*:

... गुणागमादेतनभावि चेतनः ।

ṚVPrāt XI.6

Because of the advent (*āgama*) of *guṇa* vowel ('*e*'), the term '*itana*' becomes '*etaṇa*'.

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Here *guṇa* may have been regarded as an augment (*āgama*). We can take *guṇa* as standing for the *guṇa* vowel '*e*' and *āgama* in the ordinary sense of advent or appearance.

In Piṅgala's **Chandaḥ-Sūtra** *guṇa* is used to denote 'repetition' in the context of finding out the *prastāra*, and enumeration of short and long syllables in a metre.

प्रतिलोमगुणं द्विर्लाद्यम् ॥

ChaSū VIII.26

Number two is to be repeated in reverse order keeping the short (*laghu*) vowel in the beginning (in some particular example of *prastāra*).

Again, in '*tāvadardhe guṇitam*' (ChaSū VIII.31), *guṇitam* means multiplied.

In the technical sense of vowel gradation ('*i*' to '*e*') Yāska has explained the term *śeva* very clearly in the **Nirukta**:

शेव इति सुखनाम । शिष्यतेः । वकारो नामकरणः ।
अन्तस्थान्तरोपलिङ्गी । विभाषितगुणः । शिवमित्यप्यस्य भवति ।

Nir X.17

The word *śeva* is a synonym of happiness (*sukha*). The verb *śiṣ* takes the suffix *va*, which replaces the letter next to the penultimate (i.e., *ṣ*) and optionally takes *guṇa* (*śiṣ* + *va* > *śiva* and with *guṇa, śeva*). The word *śiva* is derived from the same root also. (Tr. L. Sarup)

The nature of the three *guṇa*s, is described in a passage of the **Nirukta**:

अथैष महानात्मा सत्त्वलक्षणः ... अथैष महानात्मा त्रिविधो भवति । सत्त्वं रजस्तम इति । सत्त्वं तु मध्ये विशुद्धं तिष्ठति । अभितो रजस्तमसी इति... ।

Nir XIV.3

So this great self is of *sattva* nature... Now this great self is of three kinds characterised by *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas*. In the *mahānātmā sattva* exists in its purified form and it is associated by *rajas* and *tamas*.

The **Kātyāyana Śrauta-Sūtra** explains the relative importance of *guṇa* and *dravya*:

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गुणद्रव्ययोर्द्रव्यं प्रधानयोगात् ॥
न समत्वात् ॥
गुणानुग्रहात् ॥

KātŚrSū I.4.17–19

When there is a conflict between the material and its quality, importance is to be given to the material.

This however is not correct, because both the material and its quality are equally related to the main rite.

Since the qualities are just the explanatory things, i.e. the qualities are subordinate to the material concerned. (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

The same text applies the term *guṇa* in various senses. For example, *saguṇasthāne guṇaḥ* (KātŚrSū VI.7.23), here *guṇa* means attribute in both the places. Again it denotes merit (*guṇānāṃ tu bhūyastvāt* – KātŚrSū I.5.9); fold, times (KātŚrSū VIII.3.18).

In the sūtra, *guṇānāmekārthānām* (KātŚrSū I.8.1), *guṇa*s are said to be *ekārtha*, i.e. useful for accomplishing a purpose. Sacrificial material is said to be *guṇa* since they serve the purpose of sacrifice (*yajña*) (they are used to perform sacrifices – they do not serve themselves). It is well known that the sacrifice is *pradhāna* (principal) while all other things (including even the deities) in sacrifice are regarded as *guṇa*s (cf. the word *guṇayoga* in I.5.13, where *guṇa* bears the same sense).

Guṇa is used in the sense of thread or rope in the sūtra, *triguṇā trivyāmā kośī raśanā* (KātŚrSū VI.3.13). It is stated here that the rope by which the animal is to be tied should have three plaits; it should measure three *vyāma*s (a *vyāma* is the length of stretched arms of the *yajamāna* concerned); and it should be made of the *kuśa* grass. *Aviguṇa* in the **Baudhāyana Śrauta-Sūtra** (II.3) means bodily deficiency, which indicates that *guṇa* bears the sense of merit, excellence, etc. also.

Epics and Purāṇas

Guṇa is always used in this literature in the Samkhyan sense in the chapters on creation and dissolution and in other philosophical discussions. This literature contains a number of significant words related to *guṇa*, e.g. *guṇasāmya* (BhāgPur III.26.17), *guṇa-vaiṣamya* (ViPur V.13), *guṇa-kṣobha* (MatPur III.16), *guṇa-samāhāra* (MBh XII.219.14), etc.

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The Sāṃkhya philosophy is the science of *guṇa*s (*guṇa-saṃkhyāna* – BhG XVIII.19). Similarly Sāṃkhya teachers are described as well-versed in the science of the *guṇa*s: *yaṃ sāṃkhyā guṇatattvajñāḥ* (MBh XII.16.43a).

The **Gītā** avers that there is nothing in the mundane existence which is not a modification of the three *guṇa*s:

न तदस्ति पृथिव्यां वा दिवि देवेषु वा पुनः ।
सत्त्वं प्रकृतिजैर्मुक्तं यदेभिः स्यात् त्रिभिर्गुणैः ॥

BhG XVIII.40

There is no existent thing in heaven or earth or yet among the gods which is or ever could be free from these three constituents from Nature sprung. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

On account of this all-producing character and of the necessity of knowing the nature of the *guṇa*s by the aspirants of self-knowledge, the *guṇa*s are regarded as 'the *trivarga* of emancipation': *mokṣasyāpi trivargo'nyaḥ proktaḥ sattvaṃ rajastamaḥ* (MBh XII.59.31ab). This view of *trivarga* is also found in the Kapila-Āsuri dialogue in the Śānti-parvan (cf. Appendix No. 29A, critical edition): *ke te trayastrivargā ityatra brūmaḥ, sattvaṃrajastama iti prathamaḥ* (p. 2078).

A similar classification (*sāttvika, rājasa* and *tāmasa*) of various entities is found in the **Bhagavad-Gītā** (XVII and XVIII), viz. faith (XVII.2–6), foods (XVII.8–10), sacrifice (XVII.10–13), austerities (XVII.17–19), gift (XVII.20–22), *jñāna* (XVIII.20–22), *karman* (XVIII.23–25), *kartṛ* (agent) (XVIII.26–28), *buddhi* (XVIII.30–32), *dhṛti* (fortitude) (XVIII.33–35) and *sukha* (pleasure) (XVIII.37–39).

It is noteworthy that most of the doctrines about the nature and functions of *guṇa*s as propounded in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** and the **Yoga-Sūtra** with its *bhāṣya*, are found in this literature, sometimes with augmentation, i.e. which differ from the original views of Sāṃkhya. A few examples propounding Samkhyan and Yoga doctrines are given below:

(1) The **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (13) says that the functioning of the three *guṇa*s is similar to that of flame (*pradīpavaccārthato vṛttiḥ*). This very simile is found in the **Devī Bhāgavata** passages dealing with the nature of operation of *guṇa*s (*guṇāste dīpavṛttayaḥ* – III.9.28). *Pradīpa* or *dīpa* here means flame (but not a lamp) – a production of three things oil, wick and fire.

(2) The **Vyāsabhāṣya** on the **Yoga-Sūtra** (II.19) describes *triguṇa* in the unmanifested state as: *niḥsattāsattaṃ niḥsadasat.* The Purāṇas use

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the expression *sadasadātmaka* while referring to this state (cf. BhāgPur III.26.10; ViPur I.2.19, IV.17; BraPur I.3.1).

(3) In the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (10), the →*vyakta* is said to be →*liṅga* and as such →*avyakta* must be regarded as *aliṅga* as has been stated in this *kārikā* (*viparītamavyaktam*). This view is found in the **Mahābhārata** also: *aliṅgāṃ prakṛtiṃ prāhuḥ* (MBh XII.303.47).

(4) The mutual connection of the three *guṇa*s has been shown in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (12) (*anyonyābhibhavāśraya-janana-mithuna-vṛttayaśca guṇāḥ*). These characteristics (with some similar other characteristics) are found in the **Mahābhārata** (XIV.36.4–7; 39.2–5) and the **Devī Bhāgavata** (III.8.13–15). On account of this intimate relation of the *guṇa*s, they are called *saṃghāta-vṛtti* (working jointly) in the **Mahābhārata** (XIV.39.4) and non-separable (*avicchinna*, 39.2).

Examples of augmentation:

(1) Puranic authors are sometimes found to connect Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva or Rudra with the *rajas, sattva* and *tamas guṇa*s respectively (*rajo brahmā tamo rudro viṣṇuḥ sattvaṃ jagatpatiḥ.* – MārkPur XLVI.18).

(2) The **Devī Bhāgavata** (III.7.25–26) speaks of the three *śakti*s of the three *guṇas* – *jñāna-śakti* of *sattva, kriyā-śakti* of *rajas* and *artha-śakti* (also called *dravya-śakti*) of *tamas. Jñāna* and *dravya* show the nature of *prakāśa* and *sthiti* (connected with *sattva* and *tamas guṇa*) in a clearer way.

(3) Various things, states and functions are found to be classified according to the three *guṇa*s (the classes usually are called *sāttvika, rājasa* and *tāmasa*). One of the glaring examples of such classification is found in the three states, viz. *jāgrat* (waking), *svapna* (dream) and *suṣupti* (dreamless sleep) which are based on the predominance of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas guṇa*s respectively.

> जाग्रत्-स्वप्न-सुषुप्तं च गुणतो बुद्धिवृत्तयः ।
>
> BhāgPur XI.13.27ab
>
> The three states *jāgrat, svpana*, and *suṣupti* are the modes of *buddhi* and they are in accordance with three *guṇa*s (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*) respectively.

(4) The Purāṇas enumerate the qualities (chiefly mental) which arise when *sattva* or *rajas* or *tamas* is predominant (cf. DBhāg III.8.29–41; BhG XIV.6–18).

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(5) The three *guṇa*s are found to be symbolized in three colours – red (*rajas*), white (*sattva*) and black (*tamas*) (MBh XII.291.44–45ab).

(6) The **Yogavāsiṣṭha Rāmāyaṇa** has divided the embodied beings (*jīvajāti*) on the basis of the relation of the *guṇa*s in 13 classes, viz. *guṇa-pīvarī* etc. (III.94.3–19).

(7) Besides enumerating the →*vṛtti*s of each of the *guṇa*s separately, the **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** speaks of the *vṛtti*s of the three *guṇa*s mixed with one another (*vṛttayo varṇitaprāyāḥ sannipātamatho śṛṇu* – XI.25.5; *sannipāta* means the combined effect). Such *vṛtti*s are enumerated in three verses (XI.25.6–8).

The word *guṇa* is used in the sense of 'modifications of *guṇa*s' in many places. In *vṛtaṃ ṣoḍaśabhirguṇaiḥ* (MBh XII.47.53), *guṇa* stands for the eleven organs and five *bhūta*s – the modifications of the three *guṇa*s. Similarly *guṇa* in *prakṛtijān guṇān* (BhG XIII.21) means *sukha-duḥkha-moha* (cf. also BhG XIII.19). In the **Bhagavad-Gītā** (*guṇā guṇeṣu vartante* – III.28) both the words mean modifications of *guṇa*s, the first refers to senses and the second to objects. In *guṇā guṇeṣu līyante* (MBh XII.295.16a), the first *guṇa* means the modifications of *guṇa*s while the second *guṇa* means the three *guṇa*s in their original state.

The Purāṇas and the **Mahābhārata** contain many chapters (besides stray verses) on the essential as well as secondary characteristics (*śīla* or *svabhāva, vṛtta, kārya, guṇa, liṅga*, i.e. functions, effects, attributes, marks or signs) of the three *guṇa*s.

The **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** contains an enumeration of a number of *mahā-guṇa*s, viz. *satya, śauca, dayā*, etc. (BhāgPur I.16.26–29ab). It (BhāgPur VII.9.10) speaks of a group of twelve (*dviṣaṭ*) excellences (*guṇa*) existing in a brahmin. The twelve *guṇa*s are: *dhana, abhijana, rūpa, tapas, śruta, ojas, tejas, prabhava, bala, pauruṣa, buddhi* and *yoga* (VII.9.9). The commentator Śrīdhara remarks that this may also refer to the group of twelve *vrata*s (vows) as stated in the verse '*dharmaśca satyaṃca* ... ' in the Sanatsujāta section of the **Mahābhārata** (V.43.20; *dharma, satya*, etc. are said to be *guṇa* in 43.15).

Smṛtis

Most of the Smṛtis while dealing with the concepts like *mokṣa*, self-knowledge, creation, *karman* and the like, also deal with the three *guṇa*s, *sattva*, etc., their functions, effect and the like. The views regarding *guṇa* are

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essentially the same in Smṛtis as are found in the works on Sāṃkhya-Yoga. Later Smṛtis generally follow the views of Manu and other ancient authors of Smṛtis. According to commentators, discussions on *guṇas* are necessary as they are helpful in understanding *adhyātmavidyā*: *etacca guṇānukathanam adhyātmacintāyāmupayujyate* (Medhātithi on Manu I.78).

The **Manu Smṛti** (XII.25–50) deals with the three *guṇas* in detail. Manu (XII.5) asserts that these verses point out the results of the three kinds of actions, the system of transmigration consisting of three classes with their three subdivisions (all based on the three *guṇas*) which shows the importance of the *guṇas*. A succinct account of the views propounded in the verses is given below.

As a preliminary remark the view of the predominance of the three *guṇas* (i.e. the predominant *guṇa* makes the embodied soul distinguished for that *guṇa*) is stated, as follows:

यो यदैषां गुणो देहे साकल्येनातिरिच्यते ।
स तदा तद्गुणप्रायं तं करोति शरीरिणम् ॥

Manu XII.25

When one of these qualities wholly predominates in a body, then it makes the embodied (soul) eminently distinguished for that quality. (Tr. G. Bühler)

The characteristics of each of the three *guṇas* are shown in the **Manu Smṛti** (XII.26–29): *jñāna* (knowledge) and *prīti* (pleasure) are connected with *sattva*; *rāga* (attachment), *dveṣa* (hatred) and *duḥkha* (misery) are connected with *rajas*; *ajñāna* (ignorance) and *moha* (delusion) are connected with *tamas*.

Effects of the three *guṇas* are stated in the **Manu Smṛti** (XII.31-33). For example, austerities, restraint and so on are the effects of *sattva*; want of firmness, indulgence in sensual pleasure and so on are the effects of *rajas*; covetousness, sleepiness and so on are the effects of *tamas*. The three kinds of action performed by men and their connection with the three *guṇas* are also described in the same text (XII.34–37).

The connection of the three *vargas*, viz. *kāma, artha* and *dharma* with *tamas, rajas* and *sattva* respectively is described:

तमसो लक्षणं कामो रजसस्त्वर्थ उच्यते ।
सत्त्वस्य लक्षणं धर्मः श्रैष्ठ्यमेषां यथोत्तरम् ॥

Manu XII.38

The craving after sensual pleasures is declared to be the mark of darkness, (the pursuit of) wealth (the mark) or activity, (the desire

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to gain) spiritual merit the mark of goodness; each later (named quality) is better than the preceding one. (Tr. G. Bühler)

The three kinds of goals and regions to be achieved by mortal beings are characterized by the three *guṇa*s as stated in the **Manu Smṛti** (XII.39–50). These goals and regions have been further subdivided into three classes, viz. the lowest, middling and the highest.

A point is to be noted in this connection that though the **Manu Smṛti** says that the three *guṇa*s belong to *ātman*, self (*sattvaṃ rajastamaścaiva trīnvidyādātmano guṇān* – XII.24ab), which according to Sāṃkhya is erroneous, yet commentators explain it in the Samkhyan light saying that the *guṇa*s do not really belong to the *nirguṇa ātman* but to the first evolute of the *guṇa*s, called *mahat-tattva* or *mahadātman*. The *guṇa*s in their original state have no substratum (*āśraya, ādhāra*). In fact *ātman* or *puruṣa* becomes associated with *guṇa*s.

The word *guṇa* is used in these works in the usual sense of attribute, characteristic, quality and the like. It also denotes the sense of five qualities (*śabda, sparśa*, etc.) in the **Yājñavalkya Smṛti** (*śabdaḥ sparśaśca rūpaṃ ca raso gandhaśca tadguṇāḥ* – III.4.100: here *tad* refers to the *bhūta*s), where as in the **Manu Smṛti** it explains articles of food seasoning (*guṇāṃśca sūpaśākādyān* – III.226) and 'measures of policy' (*sandhiṃ ca ... ṣaḍguṇān* – VII.160). In *ṣaḍguṇān*, *guṇa* seems to mean *upakāraka* (helping factor).

As to why the word *guṇa* is used for sound, touch, etc. in the **Manu Smṛti** (*tasya śabdaṃ guṇaṃ viduḥ* – I.75), the commentator Medhātithi remarks that since *guṇa* means *āśrita* (dependent, resorted to) and since *ākāśa* is the substratum of sound, sound is regarded as a *guṇa* (*guṇa āśrita ucyate, ākāśaṃ tasyāśrayo na hyākāśaṃ vinā śabdasya saṃbhava*).

Grammar

Guṇa as a technical term (*saṃjñā*) is found in the **Aṣṭādhyāyī** as: '*adeṅ guṇaḥ*' (I.1.2), e.g. *a, e* and *o* are called *guṇa*s (*a* however stands for *ar* and *al*). In this sense the word is used in a large number of sūtras. It may be kept in mind that *a, i* and *u* are the simple vowels and *e* and *o* are secondary vowels. *Ar* and *al* (the two *guṇa*s) may also be regarded as secondary vowels (cf. K.C. Chatterjee: *Technical Terms and Techniques of Sanskrit Grammar*, p. 20).

The word *guṇa-sandeha* in the sentence *anirjñāte'rthe guṇasandehe ca napuṃsakaliṅgaṃ prayujyate* (Mahābh I.2.69) means doubt about the sex. In the sentence *anityā guṇā apāyina upāyinaśca* (Mahābh I.2.64), *guṇa* stands for

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both number and gender. This use of the word *guṇa* in the field of grammar is supported by the statement of Patañjali: *strīpuṃnapuṃsakāni sattvaguṇāḥ, ekatvadvitva bahutvāni ca* (Mahābh I.2.64). In this passage *sattva* stands for *dravya.*

In the sense of a thread, *guṇa* is used in the *kumbhapadyādi* group (Pā V.4.139). The example *guṇapadī* (feminine gender) means one that has legs as thin as a thread (Gaṇar II.134). In the sūtra, *saṃkhyāyāḥ guṇasya nimāne mayaṭ* (Pā V.2.47), *guṇa* means *bhāga* (portion). *Guṇa* has also a similar meaning, namely *avayava* (component part). In this sense *guṇa* is found in the sūtra, *na guṇādayo'vayavāḥ* (Pā VI.2.176). In the example, *bahuguṇā rajjuḥ, bahuguṇa* means 'having many component parts'. In the sūtra, *saṃkhyāyāśca guṇāntāyāḥ* (Pā V.4.59), the word *guṇa* means repetition (as is clear from the example *dviguṇākaroti kṣetram* – one tills the field twice).

Guṇa in the sense of a figurative sense is found in the **Mahābhāṣya:**

सर्वे हि शब्दाः प्रकारे वर्तमाना गुणवचनाः संपद्यन्ते ।

Mahābh VIII.1.12.

All words bearing the sense of similarity express secondary or figurative sense.

The word 'fire' in the sentence 'the boy is fire' (*agnirmāṇavakaḥ*) is to be regarded as *guṇa*, for fire is used here in the secondary sense of brightness (brightness of fire is superimposed on the boy). Fire means 'similar to fire'. *Guṇavacana* means 'expressing the sense of *guṇa*'. *Guṇa* in the sense of a qualifying factor is found in the statement *tadguṇasaṃvijñāna-bahuvrīhi*, showing the nature of a particular kind of the Bahuvrīhi compound. In the sentence, *yadi tāvat guṇasamudāyaḥ sādhanam* (Mahābh III.2.115), *guṇa* is used in the sense of →*śakti.* Here *sādhana* (substances in the forms of *kartṛ, karman, karaṇa*, etc.) is said to be the same as the aggregate of *guṇa*s which, according to the commentators, is power existing in *kartṛ, karman, karaṇa*, etc.

Guṇa also means the *pravṛttinimitta* of words. There is a very subtle discussion on *guṇa* in the *vārttika*, '*yasya guṇasya bhāvādadravye śabdaniveśaḥ tadabhidhāne tvatalau*' (Mahābh V.1.119). It says that the suffixes *tva* and *tā* (*tal*) denote *guṇa* – a factor on account of which an entity is denoted by a particular word. In the words like *gotva, pācakatva, kumbhakāratva*, the suffix *tva* denotes that *guṇa* on account of which an animal is called cow, or a man is called cook or potter. Technically this *guṇa* is called *pravṛttinimitta* (of words). It means 'the limitor of the state of being the thing denoted by the denotative function of a word.' As the *pravṛttinimitta* is dependent on something

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(*parāśraya*) it is called *guṇa*. Pāṇini uses the word →*bhāva* in this sense (Pā V.1.119).

A precise definition of *guṇa* is found in the **Mahābhāṣya** as:

सत्त्वे निविशतेऽपैति पृथग् जातिषु दृश्यते ।
आधेयश्चाक्रियाजश्च सोऽसत्त्वप्रकृतिर्गुणः ॥

Mahābh IV.1.44

That entity is to be known as *guṇa* which is different from substance (*sattva*, i.e. *dravya*) in nature, which inheres in it and gets destroyed, which is perceived in things of different kinds, which is capable of being created as well as not created (all these characteristics are to be taken collectively).

It is to be noted that in most of the sūtras of the **Aṣṭādhyāyī**, *guṇa* is to be taken in accordance with the above definition. This is also accepted by the Vaiśeṣika school as has been remarked by Helārāja: *sa ca vaiśeṣikaśāstraprasiddhaḥ* (on Vāk III.5.1).

Bhartṛhari defines *guṇa* in the following manner:

संसर्गि भेदकं यद् यत् सव्यापारं प्रतीयते ।
गुणत्वं परतन्त्रत्वात् तस्य शास्त्र उदाहृतम् ॥

Vāk III.5.1

Any entity is to be regarded as *guṇa* that exists in something else; differentiates it from others and is known as 'possessing function'. The name *guṇa* is given to it in grammar on account of its being dependent on something else.

Here the word *saṃsargin* shows that *guṇa* is connected with its substratum in such an intimate way that it is capable of differentiating the substratum from others. This power of differentiating is denoted by the word *vyāpāra* in the above verse.

According to Bhartṛhari, *jāti* (generality) and other dependent factors are also regarded as *guṇa*s on account of their being dependent on something. The reduplication of *yat* (*yadyat*) suggests this sense. That is why cowness (*gotva*) is a *guṇa*.

While discussing 'whether *guṇa* is a differentiating factor (*bhedaka*) or not' Patañjali concludes:

उभयमिदं गुणेषूक्तं भेदका अभेदका इति । किं पुनरत्र न्याय्यम् । अभेदका

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गुणा इत्येव न्याय्यम् ।

Mahābh I.1.1

Both the views that the qualities are differentiator and non-differentiator has been propounded. Which of the views is justified? The view that the *guṇa*s are non-differentiator is only valid.

Guṇa gives rise to the notion of the substance possessing that quality, e.g. the notion of the white or black colour presupposes the existence of some substance possessing that colour (Mahābh II.1.1). The *prakarṣa* (development, excess) of *dravya* is caused by the *prakarṣa* of *guṇa* and not by itself (cf. Vāk III.5.2).

About the existence of sound, touch, colour, taste and smell in substances a noteworthy view is found in the **Mahābhāṣya**:

सर्वाश्च पुनर्मूर्तय एवमात्मिकाः संस्त्यानप्रसवगुणाः, शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धवत्यः । यत्राल्पीयांसो गुणास्तत्र अवरतस्त्रयः शब्दः स्पर्शो रूपमिति । रसगन्धौ न सर्वत्र ।

Mahābh I.2.64

All objects having forms have two natural aspects, decrease (*saṃstyāna*) and increase (*prasava*). Objects possess sound, touch, colour, taste and smell. The material objects that possess fewer attributes contain at least three, viz. sound, touch and colour. Taste and smell do not exist in all objects (having forms).

Guṇa is said either to qualify a *guṇin* (substance possessing attributes) or to be qualified by a *guṇin* (*kadācid guṇo guṇiviśeṣako bhavati, kadācicca guṇinā guṇo vyapadiśyate* – Mahābh V.1.59). When we say *śuklaḥ paṭaḥ* (the cloth is white), *śukla* and *paṭa* denote the same object though white (*śukla*) qualifies the cloth (*paṭa*). But when we say *paṭasya śuklaḥ* (the white colour of the cloth), *guṇa* is referred to by the *guṇin*. Here the white colour is qualified by the cloth.

Words denoting *tātsthyaguṇa*s are those that are never used as adjectives as is found in the words *gandha, varṇa, śabda* and the like. These *guṇa*s are always conceived as belonging to some substances (e.g. *candanagandha, paṭahaśabda*, etc.). Words like *śukla* (white) etc. are used as adjectives also (*śuklaḥ paṭaḥ*), and as such they are not taken as words denoting *tātsthyaguṇa*.

Āyurveda

In Āyurveda, *guṇa* is chiefly used in the sense of quality or attribute and also in the sense of Samkhyan *guṇa*, i.e. *triguṇa*.

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The teachers of Āyurveda follow the Vaiśeṣika view-point while speaking of *guṇa* in the sense of quality, for they define *guṇa* as *samavāyī tu niśceṣṭaḥ kāraṇaṃ guṇaḥ* (CarSamSūSthā I.51), i.e. *guṇa* is different from action and it is not *sāmānya, viśeṣa* or *samavāya*. The definition of *dravya* (substance) as given in these works confirms the aforesaid nature of *guṇa*:

यत्राश्रिता कर्मगुणाः कारणं समवायि यत् ।
तद्द्रव्यम् ... ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.51

Dravya (substance including drugs) is that where actions and properties are located and which is the material cause (of its effect). (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

द्रव्यलक्षणं तु 'क्रियागुणवत् समवायिकारणम्' ।

SuSam SūSthā XL.3

A substance or drug necessarily implies action and attributes with which it is intimately connected and of which it is the primary cause. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Here *guṇa* is said to be that which is a substratum of qualities and actions and is also an inherent cause, a peculiar view of the Vaiśeṣika philosophy.

On account of this intimate relation existing between *guṇa* and *dravya*, the word *guṇa* is sometimes used for *guṇin*, i.e. *dravya*:

पञ्चभूतात्मके देहे ह्याहारः पाञ्चभौतिकः ।
विपक्वः पञ्चधा सम्यग्गुणान् स्वानभिवर्धयेत् ॥

SuSam SūSthā XLVI.526

This animated organism is composed of the five fundamental material principles, and the food of a living organic being necessarily partakes of the character of its corporeal components. The food, which consists of five fundamental material principles (elements), is digested, in its turn, by the five elemental heat or fire, and each of its constituent principles goes to augment its own kindred in the human organism. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

The commentary on the above passage elaborates:

गुणशब्देनात्र गुणिनः पृथिव्यादय उच्यन्ते ।

The earth etc., the locus of attributes are meant here by the term *guṇa*. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

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Division and the number of *guṇas* is known from a passage of the **Caraka Saṃhitā**, which reads:

> सार्था गुर्वादयो बुद्धिः प्रयत्नान्ताः परादयः ।
> गुणाः प्रोक्ताः ... ॥
>
> CarSam SūSthā I.49

> Sense objects (*śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa, gandha*), properties beginning with *guru*, knowledge, qualities ending with *prayatna* and beginning with *para* are called *guṇas*. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

It shows a tripartite division of *guṇas* numbering forty-one.

In the division called *vaiśeṣika*, five *guṇas*, viz. *śabda, sparśa, rūpa, rasa* and *gandha* are enumerated. In the division called *sāmānya*, thirty *guṇas* are enumerated, twenty *guṇas* in ten pairs, and the other ten. The ten pairs are: *guru-laghu* (hardness-lightness), *śīta-uṣṇa* (coldness-hotness), *snigdha-rūkṣa* (unctousness-roughness), *manda-tīkṣṇa* (dullness-sharpness), *sthira-sara* (immobility-mobility), *mṛdu-kaṭhina* (softness-hardness), *viśada-picchila* (non-sliminess-sliminess), *ślakṣṇa-khara* (thinness or smallness-coarseness), *sthūla-sūkṣma* (grossness-subtlety), and *sāndra-drava* (density-liquidity). The other ten *guṇas* are: *para* (predominance), *apara* (subordination), *yukti* (propriety), *saṃkhyā* (number), *saṃyoga* (combination), *vibhāga* (division), *pṛthaktva* (separation), *parimāṇa* (measurement), *saṃskāra* (transformation) and *abhyāsa* (repetition).

In the division called *ātmaguṇa* (belonging to the self only) six *guṇas* are enumerated, viz. *buddhi* (intellect in which memory, consciousness, patience, ego, etc. are included), *icchā* (desire), *dveṣa* (aversion), *sukha* (pleasure), *duḥkha* (sorrow) and *prayatna* (effort).

Suśruta enumerates the *guṇas* of the self in a slightly different way:

> तस्य सुखदुःखे इच्छाद्वेषौ प्रयत्नः प्राणापानावुन्मेषनिमेषौ बुद्धिर्मनः संकल्पो विचारणा स्मृतिर्विज्ञानमध्यवसायो विषयोपलब्धिश्च गुणाः ।
>
> SuSam ŚāSthā I.17

> Longing for pleasure, shunning of pain, desire, aversion, energetic undertaking of work, respiration (*prāṇa*), emission of flatus (*apāna*), closing and opening of eyelids, intellect (*buddhi*), sentiments (*manas*), deliberation, discretion, memory, knowledge of art, perseverance, sensation and perception, are the attributes of an organic individual. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

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Regarding *guṇa*s as the signs of the Supreme Self *liṅgāni paramātmanaḥ*, Caraka gives a long list of *guṇa*s (in CarSam ŚāSthā I.70–72) which is similar to the above enumeration.

The word *guṇa* is also used to refer to the nature of modification produced inside the body by the thing taken in by a person. As for example *rājikā* (black mustard) is regarded as *uṣṇa* (hot), not because it is known as hot through touch, but for the nature of the effects caused by it in the body. *Guṇa* of this nature is regarded as inferable:

> कर्मभिस्त्वनुमीयन्ते नानाद्रव्याश्रया गुणाः ॥
>
> SuSam SūSthā XLVI.514cd
>
> From the actions should be inferred the nature of the properties which are inherent in various kinds of matter.
> (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Āyurveda speaks of the *guṇa*s (qualities) of the five kinds of *dravya*s, viz. *pārthiva* (earthy), *āpya* (watery), *taijasa* or *āgneya* (fiery), *vāyavya* or *vāyavīya* (airy) and *ākāśātmaka* or *ākāśīya*.

While dealing with philosophical themes like creation and the like, the works on Āyurveda, use the word *guṇa* or *sattva, rajas, tamas* in the Samkhyan sense. The two words *avyakta* and *prakṛti* (closely connected with *guṇa*s) are also used in this connection.

Suśruta says:

> सर्वभूतानां कारणमकारणं सत्त्वरजस्तमोलक्षणम् अष्टरूपम् अखिलस्य जगतः संभवहेतुरव्यक्तं नाम ।
>
> SuSam ŚāSthā I.2
>
> The latent (unmanifest) supreme nature (*prakṛti*) is the progenitor of all created things. She is self-begotten and connotes the three fundamental or primary virtues of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*. She is imaged or embodied in the eightfold categories of *avyakta* (unmanifest). (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

In this passage *avyakta* which is characterized by *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* is said to be the ultimate material cause. It is said to be causeless (cf. *mūle mūlābhāvādamūlaṃ mūlam* – SāṃSū I.67); it is not a product of anything (cf. *mūlaprakṛtiravikṛtiḥ* – SāṃKā 3).

According to Suśruta all things are different modifications of the three *guṇa*s:

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तत्र कारणानुरूपं कार्यमिति कृत्वा सर्व एवैते विशेषा सत्त्वरजस्तमोमया भवन्ति ।

SuSam ŚāSthā I.10

Since an effect is uniform in virtue of its producing cause, the evolutionised effects or products of the *prakṛti* such as the *mahat, ahaṃkāra*, etc. necessarily partake of the three fundamental qualities (*sattva, rajas* and *tamas*). (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

Here *viśeṣa* means all evolutes beginning with the *mahat* principle.

The Samkhyan view about the nature and functions of the three *guṇa*s are also found in the works on Āyurveda:

सत्त्वं प्रकाशकं विद्धिरजश्चापि प्रवर्तकम् ।
तमो नियामकं प्रोक्तमन्योन्यमिथुनप्रियम् ॥

Kāśyapasaṃhitā-Sūtra 28

Know the *sattva* to be the illuminator, while the *rajas* is the instigator and the *tamas* has been considered as the controller. Each of them is mutually compounded. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

This may be compared with the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (13) in which *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* are said to be *prakāśaka, upaṣṭambhaka* and *varaṇaka.*

That *rajas* is the instigator was known to the Āyurveda scholars (cf. *nārajaskaṃ tamaḥ pravartate* – quoted in Cakrapāṇi's comm. on CarSam SūSthā I.57); because *tamas* cannot act without (the help of) *rajas.*

Preponderance of the three *guṇa*s in the five *bhūta*s has also been shown by the teachers of Āyurveda. Suśruta says:

तत्र सत्त्वबहुलमाकाशं, रजोबहुलो वायुः, सत्त्वरजोबहुलोऽग्निः, सत्त्वतमोबहुला आपः, तमोबहुला पृथिवी ।

SuSam ŚāSthā I.20

Of these the ether or *ākāśa* abounds in attributes of the *sāttvika* stamp, the *vāyu* in *rājasika*, the *tejas* in *sāttvika* and *rājasika*, the water in *sāttvika* and *tāmasika* and the earth in *tāmasa* attributes. (Tr. K.L. Bhishagratna)

It is to be noted that there is no *bhūta* which is *rajastamobahula*; the reason is difficult to determine.

Teachers of Āyurveda expressly speak of the connection of the three *doṣa*s: *vāta, pitta* and *kapha* with the three *guṇa*s. Suśruta has alluded to this view

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in the statement *bhinnadoṣāstrayo guṇāḥ* (SuSam Uttara Tantra LXVI.9). On this Ḍalhaṇa observes:

> त्रयो दोषा वातपित्तश्लेष्माणः । गुणा गुणमयाः सत्त्वरजस्तमोमयाः । तद्यथा रजोभूयिष्ठो मारुतो रजो हि प्रवर्तकं सर्वभावानाम् । पित्तं सत्त्वोत्कटं लघु प्रकाशकत्वात् । रजोयुक्तं वेत्येके । कफस्तमोबहुलः, गुरुप्रावरणात्मकत्वाद् इत्याहुर्भिषजः ।
>
> Ḍalhaṇa on SuSam Uttara Tantra LXVI.9
>
> *Doṣas* are three in number *vāta, pitta* and *śleṣmā*. According to the modes they (*vāyu, pitta* and *kapha*) have preponderance of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* respectively. *Māruta*, the wind is preponderant of *rajas*, as *rajas* is the instigator of all entities. *Pitta* is preponderant of *sattvaguṇa* on account of its being manifested lightly or according to some having *rajas* within. *Kapha* is preponderant of *tamas* on account of its nature of veiling and heaviness – so say the physicians. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Here the commentator affords reason why *vāta* (*marut*) is *rajobhūyiṣṭha* (one in which *rajas* is predominant), *pitta* is *sattvotkaṭa* (one in which *sattva* is in abundance) and *kapha* is *tamo-bahula*. That there was difference in opinion regarding the connection of *guṇas* with *pitta* and *kapha* has also been shown by the commentator.

Classification of qualities (internal or external) according to the three *guṇas* is found in these works (cf. SuSam ŚāSthā I.19) where qualities like *ānṛśaṃsya* (kindness), *titikṣā* (patience), *satya* (truthfulness), *dharma* (virtuousness), *jñāna* (knowledge) and the like are regarded as *sāttvika guṇas*; *duḥkhabahulatā* (miseries), *adhṛti* (absence of fortitude), *ahaṃkāra* (egoism), *ānṛtikatva* (telling lies) and the like are regarded as *rājasa guṇas*; *viṣāditva* (lamentation), *nāstikya* (tendency to disregard subtle entities), *adharmaśīlatā* (irreligious nature) and the like are regarded as *tāmasa guṇas*.

It is expressly stated that mental blemishes are caused by *rajas* and *tamas* (cf. *rajastamaśca mānasau doṣau* – CarSam ViSthā VI.5 and *mānasaḥ punaruddiṣṭo rajaśca tama eva ca* – CarSam SūSthā I.57). The commentator remarks that *sattvaguṇa* does not create such blemish.

Jyotiṣa

The words *guṇa* and *guṇana* are used in Jyotiṣa in the sense of multiplication. *Guṇana* in this sense is rarely used (cf. Bhāskara's Bījagaṇita, verse 10).

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It seems quite reasonable that these words are used for multiplication since the element of repetition is chiefly used in the traditional process of multiplication or more precisely, multiplication is made to depend on repeated addition. The definition of multiplication is: *ekasyāparatulyāvṛtti* (comm. by Durgāprasāda on the Bījagaṇita of Bhāskara). According to modern terminology this may be described as a process of addition resting on repetition of the multiplicand as many times as is the number of the multiplicator (B. Datta and A.N. Singh: *History of Hindu Mathematics*, Vol. I, p. 134; for the examples of this process, cf. pp. 135–143).

It is note-worthy that the word *abhyāsa* is also used for *guṇa* in the Śulba texts and *abhyasta* in the sense of *guṇita* (multiplied) is found in the **Vedāṅga Jyotiṣa** of the Yājuṣa recension (verses 21, 25).

In the works on Jyotiṣa, *guṇaka* (sometimes *guṇakāra*) is used in the sense of multiplier (*guṇyate'nena*); similarly *guṇya* is used in the sense of multiplicator (*yaśca guṇyate*). *Guṇa* is also used in the sense of *guṇaka* (cf. *bhakto guṇaḥ* – Līlā 2). *Guṇa* in the sense of 'times' is often used in the works on Jyotiṣa.

In later works the words *hanana* and *vadha* are found to be used in the sense of multiplication. These words are evidently based on the later method of multiplication with the decimal place value numerals. In this new method the figures of the multiplicand are successively rubbed out (i.e. destroyed) and the figures of the product are written in their places (cf. *History of Hindu Mathematics*, p. 134).

The Philosophic Schools: Darśana

Guṇa in the Samkhyan sense of 'ultimate material cause' is a technical term: *guṇa iti pāribhāṣikaḥ śabdaḥ* (Śaṅkara on BhG XIV.5). The word is sometimes used in the secondary sense of 'the modifications or evolutes of the *guṇa*s (*guṇavikāra*) (cf. *ete...guṇaviśeṣāḥ* – SāṃKā 36; *guṇāḥ giriśikharakūṭacyutā...astaṃ gacchanti* – YSūBh II.27; *guṇānāṃ* – YSū IV.34).

As to why the word *guṇa* was coined to denote the sense of 'ultimate material cause', two reasons are usually offered by the commentators. Vijñānabhikṣu, the author of the *bhāṣya* on the **Sāṃkhya-Sūtra**, thinks that since the entity called *guṇa* is the implement or instrument of →*puruṣa* or since the evolutes of *guṇa*s bind *puruṣa*s as a rope binds an animal, it is called so (*guṇaśabdaḥ puruṣopākaraṇatvāt, puruṣapaśubandhakatriguṇātmaka mahadādirajjunirmātṛtvācca* – SāṃSūBh I.61). The binding power of the *guṇa*s is depicted in the **Gītā** (*sattvaṃ rajastama iti guṇāḥ... nibadhnanti* – XIV.5).

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This view of Vijñānabhikṣu has been accepted by other teachers also (cf. Bhāskara's comm. on Lalitā 172).

Vācaspatimiśra in his commentary on the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (12) holds the same view for coining the word *guṇa* for the ultimate material cause, because the *guṇas* act for another (i.e. *puruṣa*) (*guṇāḥ parārthāḥ*). It may be assumed that since the earliest sense of *guṇa* is *avayava* (component parts forming a whole) or appropriate part (*sama avayava*) and since the sense 'constituent' may reasonably be derived from it, the word *guṇa* was coined (by the promulgators of Sāṃkhya) for the ultimate cause, having three aspects, viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas.*

Before dealing with the *guṇas* individually, it is important to take note of the common characteristics of the three *guṇas* to understand the concept of *guṇa* clearly. These characteristics are vividly observed in the manifested state of the *guṇas* (cf. YSūBh II.18 etc., YuDīp on SāṃKā 2, 3, 16, etc. and other works):

(i) The three *guṇas*, though associated with one another, remain distinct and maintain their individuality; no *guṇa* is transformed or changed into another *guṇa* at the time of their manifestation.

(ii) No *guṇa* can be dissociated from other *guṇas*; there is no beginning of their association.

(iii) When an object is named after a *guṇa*, (by using words like *sāttvika, rājasa* or *tāmasa*), it simply means that particular *guṇa* is predominant in that object.

(iv) A *guṇa* produces an object at the time of its predominance and the other two *guṇas* help the predominant *guṇa* by remaining in a subordinate state – they may be said to cooperate as associate causes.

The general function of the three *guṇas* is usually said to be fourfold as has been expressly stated in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (12). These functions are: *anyonya-abhibhava* (mutual suppression or subjugation), *anyonya-āśraya* (mutual supporting), *anyonyajanana* (mutual production) and *anyonyamithuna* (mutual consorting). To elaborate on the nature of mutual co-operation of the three *guṇas*, the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (13) gives the simile of flame (*pradīpavac cārthato vṛttiḥ*) which means to say that the three *guṇas*, though distinct from one another, act with co-operation to serve some purpose or to produce some effect like the three entities: wick, oil and fire, by assuming the form of flame through co-operation, can fulfil the purpose of illuminating objects.

It is an established view of Sāṃkhya that the *guṇas* remain either in the manifested state called →*vyakta* or in the unmanifested state called *avyakta*:

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guṇebhyo vyaktāvyakta dharmakebhyaḥ (YSūBh I.16). In the former state one of the *guṇas* remains predominant (*aṅgin, pradhāna*) and the other two subservient (*guṇa, aṅga*). This relation is usually called *guṇa-pradhāna-bhāva* (YSūBh II.15). In the latter state the three *guṇas* remain in equal state; that is why this state is often called *sāmyāvasthā* the state of equilibrium or equipose (cf. *sattvarajastamasāṃ sāmyāvasthā prakṛtiḥ* – SāṃSū I.61). This state does not give rise to any modification and it has no subtler material cause. The **Vyāsabhāṣya** on **Yoga-Sūtra** (II. 23) quotes a statement to this effect (*pradhānaṃ sthityaiva vartamānaṃ... pradhāna – vyavahāraṃ labhate*). It says that if *pradhāna* (i.e. equibalance of three *guṇas*) was always present in the quiescent or equilibrium state without undergoing any transformation, it could not be regarded as primal constituent; on the other hand if *pradhāna* always exists with transformations, then it would loose its causal character (there being no absence of effects). The *guṇas* are regarded as the primal constituent, for they have a tendency to both quiescence and activity.

It is held by the commentators that the former state is characterized by *sadṛśapariṇāma* (homogeneous modification) while the latter is characterized by *visadṛśapariṇāma* (dissimilar modification). In the former state each *guṇa* functions in and by itself, while in the latter *guṇas* act in the combined form remaining in *guṇa-pradhāna-bhāva* (cf. *kāraṇamastyavyaktaṃ pravartate triguṇataḥ samudayācca* – SāṃKā 16). The unmanifested state is said to be remaining in a potential state(*śaktimātreṇa avasthānam* – YuDīp on SāṃKā). That is why this state is regarded as imperceptible (*asaṃvedya*).

The manifested state means the state in which all the twenty-three evolutes beginning with the *mahat* principle and ending with the five *bhūtas* come into existence.

The *vyakta* state of the *guṇas* (i.e. all evolutes) is said to be *hetumat* (having a cause, material and efficient) *anitya* (non-eternal); *avyāpin* (not all-pervasive); *sakriya* (possessing *kriyā*, changing from one state to another); →*liṅga* (immergent, dissoluble); *aneka* (manifold); *āśrita* (resorted to or supported by another); *sāvayava* (with parts); *paratantra* (dependent on another). That any modification or evolute of the *guṇas* possesses these characteristics is a matter of universal experience.

The *avyakta* state of the *guṇas* is said to be of opposite nature (*viparītamavyaktam*, SāṃKā 10). Thus *avyakta* is *a-hetumat* (causeless); *na anityam*, i.e. *nityam* (eternal; this eternality is with change, *pariṇāmi-nitya*); *na avyāpin*, i.e. *vyāpin* (all-pervasive); *na sakriyam*, i.e. *akriya* (bereft of *kriyā*, i.e. changing from one particular form to another particular form); *na anekam*, i.e. *ekam* (one in number); *na āśritam* (not resorted to or supported by any other

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entity); *a-liṅgaṃ* (indissoluble or not serving as the mark of any other thing); *anavayavam* (without component parts; the three *guṇa*s are not regarded as the *avayava*s of *avyakta*; an *avayava* is that which may be detached from the whole); *a-paratantram* (not dependent on any other entity).

According to Sāṃkhya, *avyakta* is not dependent on *puruṣa* or *ātman* or *brahman*; nor is it produced from *puruṣa*. The *guṇa*s in their original state are beyond space and time. That is why in Samkhyan works *prakṛti* or *avyakta* is referred to by the word *brahman* (cf. Māṭhara Vṛtti on SāṃKā 22).

About the number of *guṇa*s and the names of the individual *guṇa*s there never arose any difference of opinion in the whole tradition of Indian philosophy. It is unanimously agreed that the *guṇa*s are three in number and that they are called as *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* (all neuter). The order is significant – *rajas* serves as a link between *sattva* and *tamas* which are quite opposite in their nature. *Rajas* conveys the meaning of a thing dirty or impure through its activity like dirt (*rajas*); *tamas* is not easily perceptible like *tamas* (darkness); *sattva* is clearly known and as such its existence (*sattva*) is naturally proved. These three *guṇa*s are not the attributes of *prakṛti*, rather they are the very form of *prakṛti* (*sattvādīnāmataddharmatvaṃ tadrūpatvāt* – SāṃSū VI.39).

The **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (12–13) speaks of the distinctive nature of these *guṇa*s, as follows:

Sattva is *prīti-ātmaka* (one whose nature is pleasure), *prakāśārtha* (one that serves to manifest or illuminate), *laghu* (buoyant) and *prakāśaka* (illuminator).

Rajas is *aprīti-ātmaka* (one whose nature is pain), *pravṛttyartha* (one that serves to activate or excite), *upaṣṭambhaka* (exciting, stimulating), and *cala* (moving, mobile).

Tamas is *viṣādātmaka* (one whose nature is stupor), *niyamārtha* (one that serves only up to a limit), →*guru* (heavy) and *varaṇaka* (enveloping) (cf. also SāṃSū I.127–128).

The nature of the three *guṇa*s has been clearly depicted in the expression *prakāśakriyāsthitiśīlam* in the **Yoga-Sūtra** (II.18). The Bhāṣya says *prakāśaśīlaṃ sattvaṃ kriyāśīlaṃ rajaḥ sthitiśīlaṃ ca tama iti.* In the **Yoga-Sūtra**, *prakāśa, kriyā* and →*sthiti* are said to be the *śīla*s (natural characteristics) of the whole *dṛśya*; but in the state of *avyakta*, in which there ceases the relation of attribute and substance, *prakāśa*, etc. are to be regarded as ultimate entities, and not the attributes of some substance.

Through the evidence of Śāstras it is known that *sattva* is to be understood as sentient principle, *rajas* as mutative principle and *tamas* as static principle.

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All three principles exist in three forms, viz. *grāhya* (objects, the thing received), *grahaṇa* (organs, means of receiving objects) and *grahītṛ* (knower, receiver, the empirical self).

There are a few significant expressions which have a bearing on the word *guṇa* in the texts on Sāṃkhya-Yoga: *guṇādhikāra* (YSūBh I.5), *guṇaparvan* (YSū II.19), *guṇapariṇāma* (SāṃKā 27), *guṇa-sanniveśa* (YSūBh IV.13), *guṇa-kartṛtva* (SāṃKā 20), *guṇavṛttivirodha* (YSū II.15), *guṇa-pravṛtti* (YuDīp on SāṃKā 24), *guṇavṛtta* (YSūBh III.13), *guṇa-pratiprasava* (YSū IV.34), etc. The immergence of *guṇa* (i.e. *citta, buddhi*, etc. which are the modifications of *guṇas*) is immediately followed by the manifestation of *kaivalya* (isolation). Since *prakṛti, avyakta* or *pradhāna* are nothing but the three *guṇas*, all views propounded by using these three words are concerned with *guṇas* (cf. SāṃKā 56–61, 63 and 65).

In the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra** (I.1.4) *guṇa* is regarded as one of the six *padārthas* (reals denoted by words). Though the **Nyāya-Sūtra** does not mention directly the word *guṇa* in the sūtra (I.1.9) enumerating the twelve *prameyas* (essential entities to be known through *pramāṇas*), yet it subscribes to the views of Vaiśeṣika about the nature and number of *guṇas* (qualities).

The definitions of *guṇa* as given by Kaṇāda and the commentator Praśastapāda are as follows:

> द्रव्याश्रयी अगुणवान् संयोगविभागेषु अकारणमनपेक्ष इति गुणलक्षणम् ॥
>
> VaiśSū I.1.16
>
> Inhering in Substance, not possessing Attribute, not an independent cause in Conjunctions and Disjunctions – such is the mark of Attribute. (Tr. N.L. Sinha)

> रूपादीनां गुणानां सर्वेषां गुणत्वाभिसम्बन्धो द्रव्याश्रितत्वं निर्गुणत्वं निष्क्रियत्वं च ।
>
> VaiśSūBh I.1.16
>
> The mark of all Attributes, e.g. *rūpa* etc. is simply the characteristic of not possessing Attribute along with the possession of Genus and of difference from Action. (Tr. N.L. Sinha)

The same view is accepted by the later authors also:

> अथ द्रव्याश्रिता ज्ञेया निर्गुणा निष्क्रिया गुणाः ।
>
> BhāPari 86
>
> Therefore, *guṇas* are to be considered as belonging to the sub-

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stances; they are bereft of any attribute and action as well.
(Tr. P. Ghosal)

On the basis of the above statements the following characteristics of *guṇa*s could be laid down:
(i) *Guṇa*s invariably inhere in substances (*dravya*s), i.e. they are dependent on substances (*dravyāśritatvaṃ dravyopasarjanatvam* – Nyāyakandalī on VaiśSū I.1.16). (ii) *Guṇa*s do not possess *guṇa*s (qualities). (iii) *Guṇa*s are not independent causes of conjunction and disjunction. It is important to note that →*karman* (motion) is said to be the cause of conjunction and disjunction.

The neo-logicians define *guṇa* in a more precise way:

सामान्यवत्त्वे सति समवायिकारणभिन्नत्वे सति कर्मभिन्नत्वम् ।

or in a shorter form:

द्रव्यकर्मभिन्नत्वे सति सामान्यवान् ।

Dīpikā on TarkSaṅg section 4

A *guṇa* is that which possesses generality and at the same time is different from the substances and motion. It is the substance only that becomes an intimate cause.

As for example colour, taste, smell, etc. never become the *samavāyin* (intimate) cause of anything; they are different from motion but are the substratum of generalities like →*sattā* (existence), genus-quality (*guṇatva*), etc.

The view is expressed more clearly in the **Tarka Bhāṣā**:

सामान्यवान् असमवायिकारणम् अस्पन्दात्मा गुणः ।

TaBhā section on guṇa

Guṇa is that which possesses universal and it is of the nature of non-inherent cause and is non-action.

In the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra** (I.1.6) *guṇa*s are said to be seventeen; they are: *rūpa* (colour), *rasa* (taste), *gandha* (smell), *sparśa* (touch), *saṃkhyā* (number), *parimāṇa* (magnitude), *pṛthaktva* (otherness, separateness), *saṃyoga* (conjunction), *vibhāga* (disjunction), *paratva* (remoteness), *aparatva* (proximity), *buddhi* (cognition), *sukha* (pleasure), *duḥkha* (pain), *icchā* (desire), *dveṣa* (aversion) and *prayatna* (volition). The commentator Praśastapāda added seven *guṇa*s (on the basis of the particle *ca* in sūtra I.1.6) and thus the number of *guṇa*s became

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twenty-four. These seven *guṇas* are: *gurutva* (heaviness, weight; it is wrong to render it by gravity), *dravatva* (fluidity), *sneha* (viscidity), *saṃskāra* (faculty), *adṛṣṭa* (invisible force, having two aspects, *dharma*, merit and *adharma*, demerit) and *śabda* (sound) (cf. Upaskāra comm.). Lightness (*laghutva*), mildness (*mṛdutva*) and the like are regarded not as independent *guṇas* but as negations of some of these *gūṇas*; as for example *laghutva* is regarded as negation of *gurutva*.

Vaiśeṣika teachers expressly say how many of these twenty-four *guṇas* are possessed by each of the nine substances. The number of *guṇas* vary in these substances to a great extent. While water, earth and →*ātman* are said to possess fourteen *guṇas*, →*kāla* and →*diś* are said to possess only five *guṇas* (cf. VaiśSūBh section on *guṇa*)

Following views about the origination etc. of the *guṇas* as propounded by the two philosophies throw much light on the nature of *guṇas*:

(1) A special (*viśeṣa*) *guṇa* of the effect is produced by the *guṇa* of its material cause. Such *guṇas* are: colour, taste, smell, touch (all of these are not produced by heat, *apākaja*), magnitude, oneness, weight, fluidity (viscidity) and speed (cf. *kāraṇaguṇapūrvakaḥ kāryaguṇo dṛṣṭaḥ* – VaiśSū II.1.24). There are however such *guṇas* as are not produced from the similar *guṇas* existing in the parts of their respective substances (*āśrayas*), because these are eternal. They are cognition, pleasure, pain, desire, aversion, volition, merit, demerit, latent impressions and sound.

(2) *Guṇas* originate other *guṇas* of the same kind (*guṇāśca guṇāntaram* – VaiśSū I.1.10).

(3) *Guṇas* get destroyed in two ways: (i) by effect and (ii) by their causes.

(4) *Guṇas* are non-inherent (*asamavāyin*) cause only.

(5) The relation between *dravya* and its *guṇas* is called perpetual co-inherence (*samavāya*). The two things connected through this relation cannot be separated, i.e. one of which is always dependent on the other.

(6) The mixture of several colours in a substance is not accepted by the Logicians. They regard such mixture as an independent colour and call it →*citra* (variegated) *rūpa*.

Though there is no enumeration of *guṇas* (qualities) either in the **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtras** or in the bhāṣya of Śabara as is found in the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtras**, yet there is no doubt that →*rūpa* and the like are regarded as *guṇas*

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by Śabara; cf. *yāvccharīraṃ tāvadasya guṇā rūpādayaḥ* (on MīmSū I.1.5); *śukla iti vā kṛṣṇa iti vā guṇaḥ* (on MīmSū I.1.25); *guṇo hi saṃkhyā* (on MīmSū VIII.3.14). Later teachers however defined *guṇa* with their number and even attempted to refute some of the views of the Vaiśeṣika philosophy.

Guṇa is defined in the **Mānameyodaya** (a work of the Kumārila School) in the following way:

> कर्मणो व्यतिरिक्तत्वे सत्यवान्तरजातिमान् ।
> उपादानत्वनिर्मुक्तो गुणो गुणविदां मतः ॥
>
> MāMey section on guṇa, 37
>
> That which, while being distinct from action has sub-genuses and is excluded from material causality. This is a quality, as accepted by those who know quality. (Tr. C.K. Raja and S.S.S. Sastri)

The school of Prabhākara defines *guṇa* as *dravyāśraya* (dependently existing in some substance), *aguṇavat* (without possessing *guṇas*) and *karmabhinna* (different from action or motion) (cf. the comm. of Nārāyaṇa on PraPañ).

According to the school of Kumārila *guṇas* are twenty-four in number: *rūpa* (colour), *rasa* (taste), *gandha* (smell), *sparśa* (touch), *saṅkhyā* (number), *parimāṇa* (magnitude), *pṛthaktva* (difference, separateness), *saṃyoga* (conjunction), *vibhāga* (disjunction), *paratva* (remoteness), *aparatva* (proximity) *gurutva* (weight), *dravatva* (fluidity), *sneha* (viscidity), *buddhi* (cognition), *sukha* (pleasure), *duḥkha* (pain), *icchā* (desire), *dveṣa* (aversion), *prayatna* (volition), *prākaṭya* (manifestedness), *śakti* (potency), *dhvani* (sound of drums, etc.) and *saṃskāra* (impressions) (cf. MāMey section on guṇa, 38–41). According to this school *varṇas* (letters) are *dravyas*. From this it is clear that the Logicians' enumeration of *guṇas* is partly rejected by this school.

Śālikanātha, the follower of the Prabhākara school, speaks of the following *guṇas*: *guṇāstu rūpa-rasa-gandha-sparśāḥ saṃkhyāparimāṇapṛthaktvāni saṃyogavibhāgau paratvāparatve buddhisukhaduḥkhecchā prayatnāśca pratyakṣagrāhyāḥ* (PraPañ). It may be suggested that these *guṇas* are to be known through perception, and that there are other *guṇas* that are inferable only. But the author is silent on inferable *guṇas*. This shows that according to the author *guṇas* are those that are mentioned in the aforesaid sentence and all of them are *pratyakṣagrāhya*. *Pratyakṣa* is of two kinds: internal and external. *Buddhi* etc. are to be known through internal perception only.

Whether all of these *guṇas* are perceivable (*pratyakṣagrāhya*) according to the school of Prabhākara is difficult to determine. It may be justified to hold that *dharma* and *adharma* are known through scripture, and *gurutva* and *laghutva*

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are known through inference (i.e. known by observing their effects) (cf. the comm. on PraPañ).

Some say that Prabhākara does not accept number as a *guṇa* and he takes *laghutva* as absence of *gurutva*. According to this school sound is a quality, and is eternal in the form of *varṇa*s. Thus this school accepts twenty-two kinds of *guṇa*s.

According to Mīmāṃsā school there are some important views enumerated about *guṇa* (quality). Śabara remarks:

> गुणो हि संख्या, न च गुणा गुणेषु वर्तन्ते ॥
>
> MīmSūBh VIII.3.14
>
> A number is a quality and no quality can subsist in another quality. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

According to the Mīmāṃsakas *jāti* (genus) is manifested through *ākṛti* (form, figure) and since *guṇa*s have no *jāti* they do not possess generality.

Śālikanātha asserts that there is no strict rule that a *guṇa* is to be apprehended with the apprehension of the substance concerned or vice-versa: *kvacid dravyāgrahaṇe'pi rūpādīnāṃ grahaṇam, rūpāgrahaṇe'pidravyasyeti nāsti dravyaguṇayorgrahaṇapratiniyamaḥ* (cf. PraPañ).

In the Mīmāṃsā system *guṇa* in the sense of auxiliary or subsidiary is due to its serving the purpose of another as *parārthatvād guṇānām* (MīmSū I.4.16) expressly states that a *guṇa* is that which serves the purpose of another (which is usually regarded as *pradhāna*). *Para* in *parārtha* means *pradhāna* (principal). That *guṇa* means *apradhāna* may undoubtedly be known from *tāni dvaidhaṃ guṇa pradhānabhūtāni* (MīmSū II.1.6). The word *guṇībhūta* in this sense occurs in the **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra** (II.1.7).

The nature of *guṇa* in the sense of subsidiary, subordinate has been repeatedly stated by Śabara:

> गुणो नाम स भवति यः स्वकार्यं कुर्वतामुपकारे वर्तते ।
>
> MīmSūBh II.1.42
>
> That is said to be the quality of a thing which helps that thing in its functioning. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

> गुणः शक्नोति विशिष्टं द्रव्यं चोदितं लक्षयितुम्, लक्षितेन च तेन प्रयोजनम्, विशिष्टस्य क्रियासाधनत्वात्, तस्मात् सोऽपि द्रव्यद्वारेण क्रियाया उपकरोति इति क्रियार्थमेव ।
>
> MīmSūBh III.1.3

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> The property serves the purpose of distinguishing the particular substance that has been enjoined, – there is need for such distinguishing of it; – as it is only a particular qualified substance that can be the means of accomplishing an act; – thus the property also helps the Act through the substance and thus 'serves the purposes' of the Act. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

It may be noted that the *guṇa* here does not only mean quality, attribute, qualification and the like, but any kind of entity serving the purpose of another is to be regarded as *guṇa*. That is why some minor ritual acts also are regarded as *guṇas* (*guṇānāṃ ca parārthatvād asaṃbandhaḥ paratvāt syāt* – MīmSū III.1.22), in which both the acts (i) called *ādhāna* (placing fire) and (ii) the *iṣṭi* (called *pavamāna*) are said to be the *guṇas* of fire, since both perform *saṃskāra* (purification) of fire (cf. comm. on MīmSū III.1.22).

In fact a *guṇa*, which is regarded as →*aṅga* (MīmSū I.4.16), acts for the completion or fulfilment of the *aṅgin* (principal) (cf. MīmSū I.3.7) and remains in the same place with the *aṅgin* (MīmSū III.4.26).

Accordingly all factors helping the chief rite are regarded as *guṇas*, viz. the deity (III.1.26–27), the *puruṣa* (sacrificer; *kva vā puruṣo guṇabhūtaḥ* – MīmSūBh I.1.1), →*yūpa* (sacrificial post), materials used in sacrifices (II.2.20, 24, 26), recitation (II.3.10), appointment of priests, sweeping or cleansing (III.1.16), etc. are regarded as *guṇas*.

Usually a sacrifice is not regarded as subordinate (*guṇa*). In this connection it is to be noted that the primary ritual act which is directly enjoined is not *guṇa* but the secondary or accessory ritual acts which help the primary act are known as *guṇas*.

In the sense of the secondary function of words, *guṇa* is used in the sūtra as: *guṇāt* (III.2.5) and in the sense of similarity it is used as: *guṇābhāvāt* (III.2.7).

In the **Brahma-Sūtra** *guṇa* is used in the sense of quality, qualification, characteristics (cf. BrSū I.2.2; II.3.25; III.3.64, etc.). A few compound words containing the word *guṇa* in the **Brahma-Sūtra** are also noteworthy: *guṇasādhāraṇya* (III.3.64) means 'a quality to be common to others' and *guṇasāratva* (II.3.29) means 'having for its essence the quality (of that)'.

In his bhāṣya on the **Brahma-Sūtra**, Śaṅkara has clearly described the nature of *guṇa* in the following passage:

> गुणस्य गुणिदेशत्वात् । गुणत्वमेव हि गुणिनमनाश्रित्य गुणस्य हीयेत ।
>
> BrSūŚBh II.3.29

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For qualities occupy the same place with the substances of which they are qualities and quality not abiding in its substance would no longer be a quality. (Tr. G. Thibaut)

Here Śaṅkara establishes the relation between the substance and its qualities. This suggests the reason for calling qualities (*guṇa*) because they are fully dependent on the substance, they are called *guṇas*.

A few important views about *guṇa* as held by the Śaṅkara school are:

(i) The qualities exist in substances in the relation of *tādātmya*, i.e. the relation of *bhedābheda* – difference and non-difference.

(ii) *Guṇas* may be either positive in nature, like *jñāna, ānanda*, etc. or negative, like *asthūlatva* (the quality of being not gross) and so on, as has been stated in the **Siddhāntaleśa-Saṅgraha:**

भावरूपाणां ज्ञानानन्दादिगुणानां ... अभावरूपाणामस्थूलत्वादिगुणानाम् ।

SiddhSaṅg p.573

Since it has been shown that (for the enlightened) the qualities which are of positive nature like omniscience, bliss, etc. ... as well as qualities in the form of negations like 'non-fat' etc. cease to exist.

So far as the empirical view-point is concerned Vedantins generally follow the views of Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika and Mīmāṃsā about *guṇas* (qualities, characteristics) with occasional differences, as for example (1) *śabda* of all kinds is regarded as non-eternal; (2) *pṛthaktva* (otherness) is regarded not as a quality but as the same as reciprocal negation (*anyonyābhāva*); (3) colour is said to belong originally to the element *tejas* and it is found in water and earth on account of their being the products of *tejas*; (4) *buddhi* or *jñāna* is not of the nature of *guṇa*, but it is of the form of modification (*vṛtti*) of *antaḥkaraṇa* (internal organ), which assumes the forms of objects. The word *jñāna* is also used in the sense of 'self-luminous immutable Brahman'.

Buddhism

In Buddhism, the term *guṇa* has several connotations. Primarily it means 'a string' or 'a cord of a robe' used for *kāyabandhana* (cf. *kāyabandhanaṃ dātabbaṃ saguṇaṃ katvā saṃghāṭiyo dātabbā* – VinPiṭ I.46). *Guṇa* here means to make tight by tying with a knot.

The term *guṇa* is also used in the sense of fold or times mostly with the numerals *eka, dvi*, etc.

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उच्चावचा हि पटिपदा समयेण पकामिता ।
न पारं द्विगुणं यन्ति न इदं एकगुणं मुतं ॥

SutNip 714

For high and low are the paths proclaimed by the ascetic. They do not go to the far shore twice; this is not experienced once.
(Tr. K.R. Norman)

Similarly, the term *caturguṇa* is mentioned in the **Dīgha Nikāya** in the same sense:

इङ्घ मे त्वं, आनन्द, चतुग्गुणं सङ्घाटिं पञ्ञपेहि । ... "एवं, भन्ते" ति खो आयस्मा आनन्दो भगवतो हटिस्सुत्वा चतुग्गुणं सङ्घाटिं हञ्ञहेसि ।

DīghNik II.128 (P.T.S)

Fold, I pray you, Ānanda, the robe in four and spread it out for me, ... 'Even so, lord' said the venerable Ānanda, in assent, to the Exalted One, and spread out the robe folded fourfold. (Tr. T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids)

It is also used to denote quality or merit. Qualities of Buddha are explained in different Pali texts.

The *dhutaguṇas* are mentioned in several passages of Pali literature. The **Milinda Pañha** enumerates twenty-eight special qualities (virtues) inherent in thirteen ascetic practices and eighteen good qualities that were acquired by the monks through these practices.

अट्ठवीसति खो पनिमे, महाराज, धुतंगगुणा यथाभुच्चगुणा, येहि गुणेहि धुतङ्गानि सब्बबुद्धान पिहयितानि पत्थितानि । कतमे अट्ठवीसति ? इध, महाराज, धुतंगं सुद्धाजीवं सुखफलं अनवज्जं न परदुक्खापनं अभयं असम्पीळनं एकन्तवड्ढितं अपरिहानियं अमायं आरक्खा पत्थितददं सब्बसत्तदमनं संवरहितं पतिरूपं अनिस्सितं विप्पमुत्तं रागक्खयं दोसक्खयं मोहक्खयं मानप्पहानं कुवितक्कच्छेदनं कङ्खावितरणं कोसज्जविद्धंसनं अरतिप्पहानं खमनं अतुलं अप्पमाणं सब्बदुक्खयगमनं । इमे खो, महाराज, अट्ठवीसति धुतंगगुणा यथाभुच्चगुणा, येहि गुणेहि धुतंगानि सब्बबुद्धानं पिहयितानि पत्थितानि ।

MilPañ (Anumāna Pañha) V.4.2

There are, O king, these twenty-eight good qualities in the vows, virtues really inherent in them; and on account of these all the Buddhas alike have longed for them and held them dear. And what are the twenty-eight? The keeping of the vows, O king, implies a mode of livelihood without evil, it has a blissful calm as its fruit,

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it avoids blame, it works no harm to others, it is free from danger, it brings no trouble on others, it is certain to bring with its growth in goodness, it wastes not away, it deludes not, it is in itself a protection, it works the satisfaction of desires and the taming of all beings, it is good for self-control, it is appropriate, (he who keeps the vows) is self-dependent, is emancipated, the keeping of them is the destruction of lust, and of malice, and of dullness; it is the pulling away of pride, the cutting of evil thoughts, the removal of doubts, the supression of sloth, the putting away of discontent; it is long-suffering, its merit is beyond weight, and its virtue beyond measure, and it is the path that leads to the end of every grief. These, O king, are the twenty-eight good qualities in the vows; and it is on account of these that all the Buddhas alike have longed for them and held them dear. (Tr. T.W. Rhys Davids)

The **Buddhacarita** holds the view that '*guṇa* can not be differentiated from the possessor of the qualities'.

गुणिनो हि गुणानां च व्यतिरेको न विद्यते ।

BudCa XII.78ab

There is no difference of the qualities from the possessor of the qualities.

Jainism

In Jainism *guṇa* is one of the three inherent qualities of all material objects (*pudgala*). Each bit of matter is a →*dravya* (substance) possessing certain kinds of *guṇas* (qualities), presented in various modes (*paryāyas*). Though modes (*paryāyas*) too reside in a substance and are devoid of qualities, they being subject to origination and destruction, do not reside in substance always. The qualities, being permanent do always reside in substance.

The capacities possessed by a substance produce modes in it and they are known as qualities. In the case of soul the qualities are consciousness, right indignation, moral-conduct, joy, endeavour, etc.; in the case of *pudgala* these are colour, taste, smell, etc.

Some popular synonyms of the term *guṇa* as mentioned in the **Pañcādhyāyī** are: *śakti, lakṣma, viśeṣa, dharma, rūpa, svabhāva, prakṛti, śīla* and *ākṛti* (Pañ I.48).

Guṇa is defined in Jainism as:

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द्रव्याश्रया निर्गुणा गुणाः ॥

TaSū V.40

Those which always reside in a substance and are themselves devoid of qualities are qualities. (Tr. K.K. Dixit)

यावद्द्रव्यभाविनः सकलपर्यायानुवर्त्तिनो गुणाः वस्तुत्वरूपरसगन्ध-स्पर्शादयः ।

NyDīp III.78

That which is associated with the *paryāyas* and is pervaded in the substances is known as *guṇa* or attribute: such as *vastutva, rūpa, rasa, gandha, sparśa*, etc. (Tr. S. Das)

Guṇas or attributes are considered as the support (*ādhāra*) of the substances (*dravyas*). These (*guṇas*) are the characteristic marks of the substances. A substance is known by its attribute or *guṇa* which it possesses.

लिंगेहिं जेहिं दव्वं जीवमजीवं च हवदि विण्णादं ।
तेऽतब्भावविसिट्ठा मुत्तामुत्ता गुणा णेया ॥

लिङ्गैर्यैर्द्रव्यं जीवोऽजीवश्च भवति विज्ञातम् ।
तेऽतद्भावविशिष्टा मूर्तामूर्ता गुणा ज्ञेयाः ॥

PSā II.38

Those characteristics by which the substances like being (*jīva*) and nonbeing (*ajīva*) are known and those having possessed the speciality of the substances are to be known as attributes like *mūrta* and *amūrta*. (Tr. S. Das)

Guṇas coexisting with the substances and *paryāyas* are subject to change. *Dravya* is associated with both *guṇa* (attribute) and *paryāya* (mode) (PPra I.57). *Guṇas* are said to be of three kinds: *sādhāraṇa* (common to all substances), *asādhāraṇa* (uncommon) and both, i.e. *sādhāraṇāsādhāraṇa* (PPraṬī I.58).

Guṇas are considered of two types, *sāmānya* (general) and *viśeṣa* (special). There are ten *sāmānya guṇas*: *astitva, vastutva, dravyatva, prameyatva, agurulaghutva, pradeśavatva, cetanatva, acetanatva, mūrtatva* and *amūrtatva*. The *viśeṣa guṇas* are sixteen in number: *jñāna, darśana, sukha, śakti, rūpa, rasa, gandha, sparśa, gamanahetutva, sthitihetutva, vartanāhetutva, avagāhanahetutva, mūrtatva, amūrtatva, cetanatva* and *acetanatva* (Nay 11-13).

The nature of attributes is in accordance with the nature of the substances, as is clear from the following statement:

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मूर्तस्य मूर्तगुणाः, अचेतनस्याचेतनगुणाः, अमूर्तस्यामूर्तगुणाः, चेतनस्य चेतनगुणाः ।

NiSāTāVṛ 168

Attributes may be tangible, inanimate, abstract and conscious according to (their locus-substance) which are tangible, inanimate, abstract and conscious. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

It is also stated that except knowledge all other attributes are *nirvikalpa* (i.e. without any alternative).

नाकारः स्यादनाकारो वस्तुतो निर्विकल्पता ।
शेषानन्तगुणानां तल्लक्षणं ज्ञानमन्तरा ॥
ज्ञानाद्विना गुणाः सर्वे प्रोक्ताः सल्लक्षणाङ्किताः ।
सामान्याद्वा विशेषाद्वा सत्यं नाकारमात्रकाः ॥

Pañ II.392, 395

Which has no form is considered as formless. That indeed, is known as *nirvikalpatā* (i.e. without an alternative). This *nirvikalpatā* is the characteristic of all other attributes except the attribute 'knowledge' (i.e. *jñāna*). Except knowledge (*jñāna*) all other attributes having proper characteristics either general (*sāmānya*) or special (*viśeṣa*), are truely, without forms. (Tr. S. Das)

It is further stated:

न गुणः कोऽपि कस्यापि गुणस्यान्तर्भवः क्वचित् ।
नाधारोऽपि च नाधेयो हेतुर्नापीह हेतुमान् ॥
किन्तु सर्वोऽपि स्वात्मीयः स्वात्मीयशक्तियोगतः ।
नानारूपा ह्यनेकेऽपि सता सम्मिलिता मिथः ॥

Pañ II.1009-1010

No attribute (*guṇa*) can be included in other attributes. (It means to say that every *guṇa* is completely different from other *guṇa*s). Neither it (*guṇa*) is a container, (*ādhāra*, lit. support), nor is it the thing contained (*ādheya*). It is neither a cause (*hetu*), nor with a cause (*hetumān*).

But all *guṇa*s are *svātmīya*s on account of being associated with *svātmīya śakti*. They are many in number having varieties and they mutually get associated with some existent entity. (Tr. S. Das)

तद्उदाहरणं चैतज्जीवे यद्दर्शनं गुणस्यैकः ।
तत्र ज्ञानं न सुखं चारित्रं वा न कश्चिदितरश्च ॥

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एवं यः कोऽपि गुणः सोऽपि च न स्यात्तदन्यरूपो वा ।
स्वयमुच्छलन्ति तदिमा मिथो विभिन्नाश्च शक्तयोऽनन्ताः ॥

Pañ I.51–52

The attribute *darśana* in the Soul (*jīva*) is neither *jñāna* (knowledge), nor *sukha* (pleasure), nor *caritra* (character), nor even any other attribute, but *darśana* (seeing) only. In this way an attribute of a substance is not any other attribute than itself. These infinite (*ananta*) attributes (*śaktayaḥ*) though separate from each other manifest themselves in the substances. (Tr. S. Das)

The Religio-philosophical Schools

The three chief religio-philosophical schools, viz. Vaiṣṇava, Śaiva and Śākta speak of the three *guṇa*s and *prakṛti* (or *avyakta*) in the discussions on creation etc. They have further dealt with *guṇa*s (qualities, attributes) under the topic *padārtha* (category) and *dravya* (substance). These schools do not always follow the views of Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika.

So far as the essential nature and characteristics of the three *guṇa*s, viz. *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* are concerned the teachers of these sects (each having a number of sub-sects) agree with the views of Sāṃkhya and in details they often propound such views as are found in the Purāṇas and the **Mahābhārata**. As for example, the connection of the *guṇa*s, *sattva*, *rajas* and *tamas* with the three deities Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva (or Rudra or Hara) has been clearly stated in the works of these sects (cf. SLah 25; PSāT I.2, etc.) in the same way as we find in the Epics and Purāṇas. About some of the evolutes of the *guṇa*s the views of these sects are partly different from those of Sāṃkhya. As for example, according to the Śaivas the mind and the organs are produced from the *ahaṃkāra* predominated by *sattva* and *rajas* respectively (Bhāskara's bhāṣya on Lalitā p.105). This is not in accordance with the established view of Sāṃkhya according to which both the mind and the organs are the products of *ahaṃkāra* predominated by *sattva* (cf. SāṃKā 25).

These sects also differ from the Samkhyan view about the essential characteristic of *guṇa*s. Though these sects, like the Sāṃkhya, regard the *guṇa*s as *jaḍa, acit* (non-intelligent, unconscious) and *vikārin* (having changes or transformation), yet in some respects they hold such views about the *guṇa*s as are not in consonance with the Samkhyan view-point. According to these sects the ultimate *prakṛti* or *avyakta* (the equilibrium state of the *guṇa*s) is caused

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and controlled by the Supreme Deity (as conceived in each of these sects) or is the *śakti* of the Deity (cf. the sectarian commentaries on BrSū I.4.3 – *tadadhīnatvādarthavat*).

Some of these sects especially the Kashmir Śaivism hold →*prakṛti* and *guṇa*s as two separate *tattva*s (cf. *prakṛtipuruṣaguṇatattvaiḥ* – Bhāskara's Varivasyārahasya, II.85; SarDSaṅg section on Śaivadarśana, p. 185; Madhvasiddhāntasāra). Abhinavagupta asserts that this difference was unknown to Sāṃkhya (*sāṃkhyāparidṛṣṭa* – TSā Āhnika 8).

According to these schools *guṇa* in its equilibrium state is called *prakṛti* which is beyond the sphere of →*bhoga* and that in the non-equilibrium state caused by *kṣobha* and connected with *bhoga* is called *guṇa* (cf. TSā Āhnika 8; Vedāntakaustubhaprabhā, II.3.14). These two states are so different that they must be regarded as two different *tattva*s. The Pāśupata school however, does not regard *guṇa*s as different from *prakṛti*, though it accepts thirty-six *tattva*s.

In the school of Rāmānuja the three *guṇa*s fall under the category of *adravya* (non-substance), which is said to be of ten kinds, the other nine being *śabda* etc.

अद्रव्यं तु सत्त्वरजस्तमः शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्ध संयोगशक्तिभेदाद् दशधैव ।

Yatīndramatadīpikā, Upodghāta 6

The Mādhva school however regards *guṇa* as *dravya* which is of twenty kinds. It should be borne in mind that the notion of *dravya* in Mādhva school is not the same as in the Nyāya school. Sāṃkhya however takes *guṇa*s as *dravya*s (*sattvādīni dravyāṇi* – SāṃSūBh I.61).

These sects (especially the sects of Nimbārka, Vallabha and Caitanya) emphatically declare that like the *prākṛta* (born of *prakṛti*) *guṇa*s, there are *aprākṛta guṇa*s also. To show this distinction the word →*śuddha* or *viśuddha* is sometimes added with *sattva* etc. by the teachers of these sects.

The word *nirguṇa* is also explained by these sects. In Vedic and other authoritative texts the word *nirguṇa* (bereft of *guṇa*s, qualities, characteristics) is sometimes found as an epithet of the Supreme Deity – God. Since these sects regard the Supreme Deity as eternally possessing qualities, they explain the word *nirguṇa* by saying that the word means bereft of or free from undesirable *guṇa*s born of *prakṛti* (*nirguṇavādāśca prākṛtaheyaguṇaniṣedha viṣayatayā vyavasthitāḥ* – SarDSaṅg section on Rāmānuja philosophy, p. 110;

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Jīvagosvāmin's Bhāgavata-Sandarbha, section 48). Sometimes *nirguṇa* or *aguṇa* are explained to mean devoid of such *guṇa*s as are changeful, non-eternal and the like.

The school of Vallabha which regards God as eternally possessing six divine qualities (lordship, power, etc.) sometimes describe *brahman* as *guṇavarjita* (Vallabha's Tattvārthadīpanibandha, verse 65). It is explained by *prakṛta-guṇa-rahita* in the auto-commentary. This school has its view about the character of being *saguṇa*. According to this school *saguṇa* means 'one having the *abhimāna* of *guṇa*s', i.e. 'taking *guṇa* as the part of one's own self'. Such *abhimāna* is said to exist in the *devatā*s (deities) and as such they are regarded as *saguṇa*s. Since *brahman*, the Supreme Deity, has no *abhimāna*, he is regarded as *nirguṇa*.

Tantra-Āgama

Tantric school postulates that *prakṛti* being inert is unable to proceed to activity without the intervention of any sentient being. Therefore, they uphold the view that the will of the Lord impels *prakṛti* to move on, in order to create →*buddhi, ahaṃkāra, manas* and so on.

According to Kashmir Śaiva system it is stated that above *buddhitattva* and below *prakṛti* another principle named *guṇatattva* should be postulated but according to the Samkhyan view *prakṛti* has two aspects, the one is equilibrium (*sāmyāvasthā*) and the other is disequilibrium (*vaiṣamya*). In Śaivism, the number of the principles (*tattvas*) is thirty-six, therefore, there is no distinct place for *guṇatattva*. As regards the process of creation they uphold same view with that of Samkhaits.

This is stated in the following verses thus:

उपरिष्टाद्धियोऽधश्च प्रकृतेर्गुणसंज्ञितम् ॥
तत्त्वं तत्र तु संक्षुब्धा गुणाः प्रसुवते धियम् ।

TĀl VIII.253cd–254ab

Above intellect and below *prakṛti* lies the category named, *guṇa*, where they (*guṇāḥ*) being perturbed, give birth to intellect.
(Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

Unlike Sāṃkhya, Śaiva thinkers conceive the existence of *guṇa*s in subtle forms beyond *prakṛti* and other principles. They are only viewed by the Yogins:

धरायां गुणतत्त्वान्ते मायान्ते क्रमशः स्थिताः ।
गन्धो रसो रूपमन्तः सूक्ष्मभावक्रमेण तु ॥

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... शक्तितत्त्वान्तेऽप्यस्ति सौक्ष्म्यभाक् ।
स्पर्शः कोऽपि सदा यस्मै योगिनः स्पृहयालवः ॥
तत्स्पर्शान्ते तु संवित्तिः शुद्धचिद्व्योमरूपिणी ।

TĀl XI.29-31ab

In the earth, at the end of *guṇa* principle (from water to *guṇa*) and *māyā* (that is from *puruṣa* to *māyā*) there exist smell, taste and colour, respectively in the order of their comparative subtlety. ... Even at the end of *śakti* principle there is a certain subtle form of touch, for attaining which yogins are much inclined to have its experience. But consciousness at the end of (above stated) touch shines as pure consciousness with the characteristic of void. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

Polities

In the **Artha-Śāstra** *guṇa* as a technical term means state policy, or measure or method of policy. It is called *guṇa*, since it is *apradhāna* (subordinate) being solely dependent on the king. As the *guṇa*s are six, the word *ṣāḍguṇya* (in the sense of six *guṇa*s) is often used in authoritative works.

The **Artha-Śāstra** of Kauṭilya deals with these policies elaborately.

सन्धि विग्रहासनयानसंश्रयद्वैधीभावा षाड्गुण्यम् इत्याचार्याः ।

ArthŚ VII.1

My teacher says that peace, war, observance of neutrality, marching, alliance, and making peace with one and waging war with another are the six forms of state policy. (Tr. Shama Sastry)

Kauṭilya goes on to define:

तत्र पणबन्धः सन्धिः । अपकारो विग्रहः । उपेक्षणमासनम् । अभ्युच्चयो यानम् । परार्पणं संश्रयः । सन्धिविग्रहोपादानं द्वैधीभावः ।

ArthŚ VII.1

Agreement with pledges is peace (*sandhi*), offensive operation is war (*vigraha*); indifference is neutrality (*āsana*); making preparation is marching (*yāna*); seeking the protection of another is alliance (*saṃśraya*) and making peace with one and waging war with another is termed a double policy (*dvaidhībhāva*).

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However, about the number of the *guṇas* there has been difference of opinion as has been quoted by Kauṭilya the view of Vātavyādhi, according to whom the *guṇas* are two only, viz. *sandhi* and *vigraha.*

Besides the **Artha-Śāstra** of Kauṭilya, the **Nītiprakāśikā** ascribed to Vaiśampāyana (VIII.80–85), the **Kāmandakīya-nīti-sāra** (IX–XI) contain elaborate discussion on the above mentioned six policies with some varieties. For example, →*sandhi* is said to be of sixteen kinds, each having a significant name, viz. *ātmānīśa* (offering oneself as the prey); *ātmarakṣaṇa* (saving oneself); *adṛṣṭapuruṣa* (in which no person is definitely prescribed); *daṇḍopanata* (in which submission is made with the army); *kośotpanna* (offering of the treasury), etc. That though the names of six policies have no variation, yet the order is sometimes found to be different, e.g. Kauṭilya reads *āsana* and *yāna* in the third and fourth place (VII.1) though in other works they are read in the fourth and third place, respectively.

In the works on Dhanurveda the word *guṇa* is usually used in the sense of the string of the bow (cf. *guṇaprakṛtayastisraḥ* – Kod VI.1, the material cause of the string is of three kinds).

Manifestation in the Arts: Dramaturgy and Poetics

In Bharata's **Nāṭya-Śāstra**, the earliest work on dramaturgy and poetics, *guṇa* as a technical term has been used for negation of defect. Bharata has discussed the *guṇas* alone in the chapters XVI to XVII, which are devoted to *vācikābhinaya.*

In the context of *vākya*, Bharata deals with the morpho-semantic features, viz. *lakṣaṇa*, *alaṅkāra, doṣa* and *guṇa* (cf. NŚ XVI). The *doṣas* are incidentally referred to for the enumeration of *guṇas*. The real components of good poetry are *lakṣaṇas, alaṅkāras* and *guṇas*:

अन्योन्यसदृशा यत्र तथा ह्यन्योन्यभूषणाः ।
अलङ्कारा गुणाश्चैव समाः स्युः समतामताः ॥
NŚ XVI.101

Where *alaṅkāras* and the *guṇas* are similar to each other and they adorn each other, in that place their position is similar and their similarity is accepted (by ancient teachers).

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Though the *doṣa*s are not always the opposite of *guṇa* (e.g. as in Āyurveda etc.), yet this character of *guṇa* has been introduced by Bharata: *guṇāḥ viparyayādeṣām* (NŚ XVI.95). Accordingly *guṇa* is the elimination or negation of defect (*doṣa*). It is a distinctive mode of expression to convey the sense clearly.

The **Nāṭya-Śāstra** speaks of *guṇa*s (qualifications) pertaining to actor, spectator and others and also *guṇa*s of poems but it does not define the term *guṇa*. From *evamete hyalaṃkārāḥ ... vakṣyāmi rasasaṃśrayam* (NŚ XVI.109), which says that 'the application of *guṇa*s, *doṣa*s and *alaṅkāra*s will be described in connection with *rasa*s' it appears that *guṇa*s occupy a subordinate position. It appears that the use of the *guṇa*s is similar to that of ornaments; in other words *guṇa*s adorn the things by which it is possessed *alaṅkārairguṇaiścaiva .. tadbhūṣaṇamiti smṛtam* (NŚ XVI.6).

The **Nāṭya-Śāstra** describes the general nature of *guṇa* (merit) as:

गुणा विपर्ययादेषां माधुर्यौदार्यलक्षणाः ॥

NŚ XVI.96cd

The *guṇa*s are the negation of faults and they are characterized by sweetness and depth of meaning.

The word *nāṭakāśraya* appearing in the first half of the above verse undoubtedly pertains to the field of *nāṭaka*s.

After this, the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** enumerates ten *guṇa*s of *kāvya*:

श्लेषः प्रसादः समता समाधिर्माधुर्यमोजः पदसौकुमार्यम् ।
अर्थस्य च व्यक्तिरुदारता च कान्तिश्च काव्यस्य गुणा दशैते ॥

NŚ XVI.97

Śleṣa, prasāda, samatā, samādhi, mādhurya, ojas, pada-saukumārya, artha-vyakti, udāratā and *kānti* are the ten *guṇa*s of poetry.

These *guṇa*s are defined subsequently one by one (NŚ XVI.98–108). The nature of all these *guṇa*s has been considered in the works on poetics elaborately which is similar to that in the **Nāṭya-Śāstra**.

The **Nāṭya-Śāstra** speaks of *guṇa*s (qualifications or merits) of various factors concerning →*nāṭya*, e.g. the *guṇa*s of a spectator (*prekṣaka*, cf. XVII.51–53ab, viz. possessing unruffled senses, honesty, etc.), *guṇa*s of performance (*prayoga*, cf. XVII.90) etc.

In poetics, *guṇa* is the earliest mode of literary appreciation. Dr. V. Raghavan in his work on *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa* says "*mādhurya* or sweetness is the

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earliest *guṇa*" (V. Raghavan, *Bhoja's Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa*, p. 244), as the first expression of joy of an enjoyer of music, drama or poetry is *madhuram*. As in the **Rāmāyaṇa**: *pāṭhye geye ca madhuram; .... aho gītasya mādhuryaṃ ślokānāṃ ca viśeṣataḥ* (Rām I.4.8ab, 17cd).

Bharata also regarded *guṇa* as belonging to the →*kāvya* as a whole and not to the style, while the later writers Mammaṭa and others regarded the *guṇa* as belonging to →*rasa*.

The difference between *guṇa* and *alaṅkāra* is that the *guṇa*s are permanent qualities constituting *kāvya*, whereas the *alaṅkāra*s are extraneous causes that produce charms. The *guṇa*s are said to be related to →*rīti* 'structural arrangement of words' in the *samavāya* (inseparable) relation, whereas the *alaṅkāra*s exist in the relation of *saṃyoga* (conjunction).

Bhāmaha in his **Kāvyālaṅkāra** (III.1.2) has discussed the ten *guṇa*s accepted by Bharata, but he himself accepted only three, viz. *mādhurya* (elegance), *ojas* (vigour) and *prasāda* (lucidity). In his view the *guṇa*s are integral to the structure of the style. Udbhaṭa has accepted this view in his commentary on the **Kāvyālaṅkāra**.

Vāmana who is regarded as one of the teachers of the *guṇa* school has defined *guṇa* as: *kāvyaśobhāyāḥ kartāro dharmā guṇāḥ* (KāvyālSū III.1.2). Through this definition he has differentiated *guṇa* from *alaṅkāra* by saying that *guṇa*s beautify the poetic composition while *alaṅkāra*s heighten the nature of composition. He has counted ten *guṇa*s with relation to words and ten with relation to meaning (*śabdaguṇa, śabdārthaguṇa*). It is noteworthy that he has used the same terms in double sense to denote the *guṇa*s of words and those of meanings. According to Vāmana these *guṇa*s are *nitya*.

In his view *vaidarbhī rīti* is endowed with all these ten *guṇa*s, *gauḍīya rīti* specially affects *ojas* and *kānti*, and *pāñcālī* is specially characterized by *mādhurya* and *saukumārya* (KāvyālSū I.2.11–13).

In the opinion of Mammaṭa *guṇa*s are the qualities of poetry like bravery which is a quality of the self. They are *utkarṣahetu*, causes of excellence (KāPrak VIII.1–2). Further he has expressed it as a *dharma*, 'an *aṅga*' the *aṅgin* being *rasa*, they are permanent (*acalā sthiti*). Mammaṭa while criticizing Vāmana, says that what Vāmana calls different *guṇa*s, are sometimes such, that some of them are modifications of one and the same *guṇa*. In many cases the so called *guṇa*s are but the absence of defects. Mammaṭa and Hemacandra reduce the *guṇa*s to *mādhurya, ojas* and *prasāda* to show that the rest are either included in these three or are really *doṣābhāva*. Again what has been counted as *guṇa* by some, have been regarded by others as poetical skill. It has been suggested

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that the *guṇas* are those excellences which influence the mind in particularly favourable manner and make speech original.

Daṇḍin makes no distinction between *guṇas* and *alaṅkāras* but includes them within the style. In his view *guṇas* are ten in number.

इति वैदर्भ मार्गस्य प्राणा दश गुणाः स्मृताः ।
एषां विपर्ययः प्रायो दृश्यते गौडवर्त्मनि ॥

Kāvyād I.42

These ten *guṇas* are the essence of *vaidarbhī* style while the *gauḍī* style generally presents the opposites or absence of ten *guṇas*.

Guṇas permanently associated with *rasas* and *alaṅkāras* are like ornaments worn on the limbs of the body (cf. *tamarthamavalambante ye'ṅginaṃ te guṇāḥ smṛtāḥ, aṅgāśritā stvalaṃkārā mantavyāḥ kaṭakādivat* – DhvĀl II.7). In this verse the relation between *guṇa* and *alaṅkāra* is established while the *guṇas* are connected with the *aṅgin rasa* (sentiments), *alaṅkāras* are connected with *aṅga*, i.e. *śabda* and *artha*.

The rhetorician Viśvanātha in his **Sāhitya-Darpaṇa** has defined *guṇa* as:

रसस्याङ्गित्वमाप्तस्य धर्माः शौर्य्यादयो यथा गुणाः ।

SāDar VIII.1

The properties of the predominant sentiment (of a *kāvya*; on account of its excellence) are designated as *guṇas*, e.g. *śaurya* etc. (valour and likewise belonging to a person). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

He considered *alaṅkāras* and *rītis* along with *guṇas* as *utkarṣahetu* 'the means of heightening the *rasa*' (cf. *utkarṣahetavaḥ proktāḥ guṇālaṅkārarītayaḥ* – SāDar I.3). He accepted Bhāmaha's view while enumerating the *guṇas*.

माधुर्य्यमोजोऽथ प्रसाद इति ते त्रिधा ।

SāDar VIII.2

Those (*guṇas*) are three in number, viz. *mādhurya* (elegance), *ojas* (vigour) and *prasāda* (lucidity). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Varieties of the different kinds of *guṇas* are given in the **Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa** and other works also.

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Music

Guṇa has been treated in Saṅgīta-Śāstra, along with *doṣa*. Generally the term stands for the attribute of any object, e.g. sound is a *guṇa* or attribute of →*ākāśa* (space). But in this discipline it denotes good quality or point of excellence.

In music *guṇa* has been used in respect of vocal and instrumental music, dance as well as the materials used in constructing musical instruments. In vocal music, *guṇa* has been viewed in relation to the performer, the medium (voice) and the product (→*gīta*, the form and content of singing). Similarly, in instrumental music, the performer, the medium (the hand) and →*vādya*, (the form and content of rendering on the instrument) have been the points of reference in the treatment of *guṇa*. In dance, the *guṇa*s of the dancer have been described; they include the qualities of the physique, technique and the psychic involvement of the dancer.

Two basic texts on music the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** and the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara**, have discussed these points in details. As for example, the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** mentions six qualities of voice of a singer as:

श्रावणोऽथ घनः स्निग्धो मधुरो ह्यवधानवान् ।
त्रिस्थानशोभीत्येवं तु षट् कण्ठस्य गुणा मताः ॥

NŚ XXXIII.12

Audibleness, density, softness, sweetness, attentiveness and appropriately controlled by the three places, viz. chest, head and mouth (*tristhānaśobhī*), these six are considered to be the qualities of voice.
(Tr. P. Ghosal)

It is remarkable to note here that the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** (III.68–77) has mentioned fifteen qualities of voice, viz. *mṛṣṭa, madhura, cehāla, tristhānaka, sukhāvaha, pracura, komala, gāḍha, śrāvaka, karuṇa, ghana, snigdha, ślakṣṇa, raktiyukta* and *chavimān*. Further, it has spoken of eight more inborn qualities.

While discussing on the qualities of a teacher, the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** presents a list of six qualities:

ज्ञानविज्ञानकरणवचनप्रयोगसिद्धिनिष्पादनानि षडाचार्यगुणाः ।

NŚ XXXIII.11

Profound knowledge, competence, excellence of vocal organ, etc., power of expression, skillful performance, power of imparting lessons to the students – these six are the qualities of a teacher.
(Tr. P. Ghosal)

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Besides this the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** has discussed on six *guṇas* of the singer (NŚ XXXIII.2, cf. SR III.210–211b), six *guṇas* of the female singer (NŚ XXXIII.3–4), eight *guṇas* of flute players (NŚ XXXIII.9, cf. twelve qualities in SR VI.663–665), six qualities of instruments (NŚ XXXIII.10, cf. ten qualities in SR VI.1208–1214), eight *guṇas* of hand (NŚ XXXIII.21, cf. ten qualities in SR VI.1220), ten *guṇas* of lute players (NŚ XXXIII.7–8, cf. sixteen in SR VI.1215–1219). It is important to note that in the present context the term *vādaka* used in the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** refers to players of all kinds of instruments. Moreover, the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** speaks of thirty *guṇas* of *vāggeyakāra* (SR III.3–9), twenty-three qualities of an excellent singer (SR III.13c–18b), ten qualities of *gīta* (SR IV.374–378b), even qualities of the *pātra* (female dancer) are described by Śārṅgadeva (SR VII.1231–1239).

The term *guṇaka* is also used to denote string of a bow or of a musical instrument bearing the sense of a constituent part, ingredient, component or element:

> यदा ते वीणाय तन्तियो न एव अच्चायता होन्ति नातिसिथिला, समे गुणे पतिट्ठिता, अपि नु ते वीणा तस्मिं समये सरवती वा होति, कम्मञ्ञा वाऽति ?
>
> VinPiṭ I.5.1.16 (p. 182)
>
> When the strings of your lute were neither too taut nor too slack, but were keyed to an even pitch, was your lute at that time tuneful and fit for playing? (Tr. I.B. Horner)

In the **Buddhacarita** *guṇa* is also used to denote a string of girdle:

> ताः स्रस्तकाञ्चीगुणविघ्निताश्च ... ।
>
> BudCa III.14a
>
> Those ladies were hindered by their girdle strings that had slipped down.

Architecture

The term *guṇa* is used in Śilpa-Śāstra to denote lines in a diagram (→*rekhā*). It conveyes the sense of three qualities, character, characteristics, multiplication also; *guṇa* meaning string or rope stands for →*bhūmi* or ledge: *saptaguṇa bhavet cālam* (Śilpasāriṇī).

Guṇa used to denote a line also indicates the primary meaning of the concept as rope. We find the term *guṇa-rekhā*, meaning parallel lines or incisions on receding levels as in the **Śilpa Prakāśa**:

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तत् स्थानमुभये पार्श्वे समभागे गुणाकृतौ ।
समकार्यान्तरे रम्ये द्वारदेशाकृतौ सदा ॥
गुणसमविभागेन बाणधा वेदधा तथा ।
केवलं मध्यभागेन कणिकाकृति गुण्डिका ॥

ŚiPrak II.354–355

On both sides of this place lines should be made at equal distance. Then the same work should always be made around the whole beautiful door-like part.

These lines in equal spacing may be three or five and only in the central band there should be bead-work (*guṇḍikā*) on the form of a profile (*kaṇikā*) a *pheṇi*. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

Guṇa also denotes a line or a line-work which is mainly drawn with the help of a rope as is clear in the following verses:

एते तु गुणभेदाः स्युः शृणु देशांगनिर्णयम् ।
शीर्षदेशे समाने च न भित्तिः न च गर्भके ॥

ŚiPrak II.657

These are the different lines (of the composition). Hear the description of the upper parts. In the remaining part there is equally no wall (*bhitti*) in this kind of *garbhaka*. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

पक्षभागे यदा पीठं पद्मपत्रसुशोभितम् ।
खोदयेन्निपुणः शिल्पी गुणानुसारतः तथा ॥

ŚiPrak II.385

The second part is a *pīṭha* with beautiful lotus-petals. A skilful *śilpin* will carve them with line-work. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

क्षुद्रक्षेत्रगुणाकारे केवलं छेदसन्निधौ ।
आद्यप्रान्ते गर्भकं च अनर्थः स विधीयते ॥

ŚiPrak II.127

Narrow sections made only by line-incisions (with bevelled edges) reaching from the base to the top (on a lengthwise band), that is known as the (*paṭṭikā*) *anartha*. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

Guṇa means here incised lines in connection with the *paṭṭikā*, a narrow vertical band on the temple spire.

The three *guṇas* of Sāṃkhya are also related to parts of the temple. In the words of Dr. Bettina Bäumer: "First of all the ascending order of the temple

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follows the three *guṇa*s: *tamas* is related with the heaviness of the earth-part below; *rajas* with its multiplicity of forms and figures in the middle, and *sattva* which is light and lightness at the top". ("Lines of Fire, Lines of Water: The Elements in Śilpaśāstra", in *Prakṛti: The Integral Vision*, Vol. III, p. 120.)

In the **Śilparatnakośa** the three *guṇa*s are applied to the whole temple structure of *rekha* type (i.e. north-Indian temple type with a straight spire, spire with a continuous curvature) which is identified with the *puruṣa*.

प्रासादः रेखपीढाख्यः द्विविधः भास्करमते ।
विमानं पुरुषाकारं पीठात् ध्वजस्थलावधिः ॥
तामसराजस सत्त्वं गुणत्रयं क्रमोदितं ।
भुवनभागसंयुक्तं रेखप्रासाद एव च ॥

ŚiRaKo 6–7

In the opinion of Bhāskara (architect) the temple is of two types: *rekha* and *pīḍha*.
The *vimāna* (temple) is in the form of the Puruṣa (Man), from the *pīṭha* (plinth) up to the flag (on the top).
In ascending order it follows the three *guṇa*s: *tamas, rajas* and *sattva*.
The *rekha* temple consists of fourteen parts.
(Tr. B. Bäumer and R.P. Das)

Even the three sections of a *yantra* are related to the three *guṇa*s, from below to upwards: *tamas, rajas, sattva*. Thus the lines and triangles are also related to the three *guṇa*s.

योगिनीपीठमुख्या च तन्त्रशास्त्रानुसारतः ।
भूमौ बिन्दुत्रयं नीत्वा समभागेन विस्तृते ॥
एकं त्रिकोणं यत्कुर्यात् आद्यबिन्दुसमाश्रिता ।
सत्त्वत्रिकोणमेतच्च रजस्त्रिकोणसन्निभम् ॥
बिन्दुक्रान्ता तदा रेखा रजोरेखा हि कथ्यते ।
बाहुप्रान्तं समारभ्य योजयेत् तमसापि वा ॥
निम्ने तमोगुणा छेदा त्रिकोणविपरीतगा ।
ततः सत्त्वं मध्यभागे रेखाकरणमुत्तमम् ॥
तद्वत् तामसिके चैव निम्नरेखा च निम्नगा ।
योजयेत् त्रिभुजाकारे रजोबिन्दुं समाचरेत् ॥

ŚiPrak I.91–95

The *Yoginī-pīṭha* (*yantra*) is fundamental according to the Tantraśāstra. On the ground three points should be made at equal distance.

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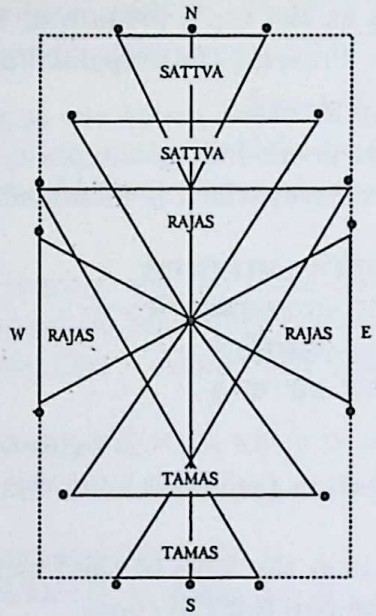

Figure 7: *Yoginīyantra*

Resting on the upper *bindu*, two triangles should be made. One is *sattva trikoṇa* and the other similarly is *rajas trikoṇa.*

The line passing through the *bindus* is called *rajarekhā* (*rajas*-line). Beginning from the end of the line, the *tamas* (triangle) should be joined to it.

Below, the lines of this *tamoguṇa* form a triangle in opposite direction. Then it is best to draw a line across the middle of the *sattva guṇa.*

Similarly in the *tamas trikoṇa* below turned downwards a line is going across. These (lines) are joined with the *rajobindu* (central point) forming triangles. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

Guṇa also means one type of *anurāhā* or *rāhā* design as mentioned in the **Śilpa-Prakāśa:**

समभागे तथा स्तम्भे समभागानुभागिनः ।
प्रस्थे च क्षीणयुक्ते च भागस्तत्र स जायते ॥
कुंभिका प्रतिछेदेन कुंभाकारे यथाक्रमे ।

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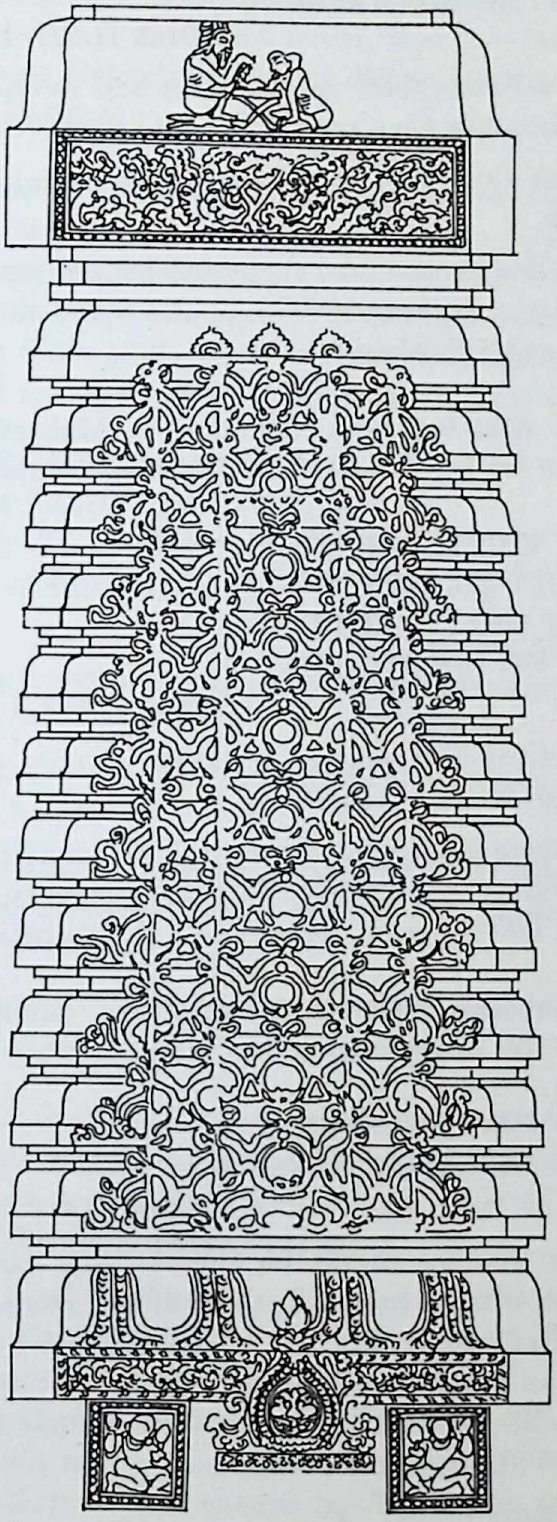

Figure 8: *Guṇa* design on *rāhā*, Mukteśvara temple, Bhubaneswar, ca 10th Cent. A.D.

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गुणसा सुमनाकारे गृहच्छेदान्तरे तथा ॥

ŚiPrak II.121–122

In these equal divisions there are *stambha*s and *toraṇa*s in the form of domes. Horizontally they are divided into parts (by thin lines).

In every section there is a *kumbhikā*, the *kumbha*-like shapes are placed in a row.

It has outlines like thorn-apples (indented *bhūmi*s) in each section. (The sections are in the form of thorn-apples with indented corners). (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

Guṇa design on *rāhā* has been identified in Mukteśvara temple, Bhuvaneswar. It has been further described in the **Śilpa-Prakāśa**:

समक्षेत्रे समानेन समाकारे विधानतः ।
अन्ते ऊर्ध्वकोणभागं कुटिलच्छेदं खोदयेत् ॥
मध्ये तोरणछेदश्च अर्धवर्त्तुल केशरम् ।
एते हि गुणभेदा स्युः नानाकारे मनोहरे ॥

ŚiPrak II.143–144

With equal sections narrowing in a regular manner on both sides (the corners) are cut into a curve.

In the middle there is a *toraṇa* – incision (and around) a half-circle of filaments (*ardha-vartulakeśara*). This is the *guṇa* type which is of many beautiful kinds. (Tr. A. Boner and S.R. Sharma)

In architecture, *guṇāṃśa* means dimensional unit. Dimensions of the sanctum are laid down in the **Mayamata**:

हर्म्यतारत्रिभागैकं भूतांशेषु गुणांशकम् ।
धातुभागे युगांशः स्याद् बाणांशं नवभागिके ॥

Mayam XIX.1

Here are all the possible widths for the sanctum calculated from the width of the temple: one-third, three-fifths, four-sevenths, five-ninths,.... (Tr. B. Dagens)

The three *guṇa*s are also applicable to three temple styles, viz. *nāgara, drāviḍa* and *vesara*, as in the **Mayamata**.

स्यान्नागरं द्राविडवेसरं च क्रमेण वै सत्त्वरजस्तमांसि ।
महीसुरोर्वीपतिवैश्यकास्ते हरिर्विधाता हर आधिदैवाः ॥

Mayam XXI.99

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There are three kinds: *nāgara, drāviḍa* and *vesara* (corresponding) respectively to *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, that is to brahmins, kings and *vaiśya* whose respective tutelary deities are Hari, Vidhātṛ and Hara. (Tr. B. Dagens)

In temple-architecture the three *guṇas*, viz. *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, constituting the nature of reality, find their expression in various contexts. In the **Śilparatnakośa** these three *guṇas* are compared with the three parts of the *śikhara* and with three kinds of images. It is very interesting to note that while describing the three main parts of the *śikhara*, their harmonious relationship has been established in comparision to the balance of the three *guṇas*.

समत्रिभागशिखरे अन्यशास्त्रानुमोदितः ।
समानत्रिगुणं यत्र त्रिभागः शृणु तत्क्रमः ॥
पादगृहं चूलनिम्ने क्षुद्रं वा विशदाकृतिः ।
पादस्य तलदेशे च बैठि एकभागतः ॥

ŚiRaKo 138-139

Śikharas consist of three equal parts. This is also accepted in other Śāstras.

Now listen to the order of the three parts, which correspond to the three *guṇas* in balance.

First there is the *pāda* (pedestal), then the *gṛha* (niche) and finally the *cūla* (crest). The lower part is (either) of small or large shape.

At the bottom of the *pāda* is a seat (*baiṭhī*) which consists of one part. (Tr. B. Bäumer and R.P. Das)

Here a symbolical identity of the →*pāda* (base) with *tamas* (the heavy and solid quality), of *gṛha* (niche) with *rajas* (the active and dynamic quality) as the image is contained in the niche, and of *cūla* (crest or crown) with *sattva* (the transparent and bright quality), is implied.

In the context of image-making, the **Śilparatnakośa** gives a description of the nature of images, identifying them with the three *guṇas*. The three types of expressions of the images are *lāsya, ugra* and *bhayaṅkara*, i.e. peaceful, powerful and terrifying, identical with the three *guṇas*: *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* respectively according to their mood. Any type of image could be related with one of such categories according to their nature, bodily features and mood.

विग्रहस्त्रिविधः श्रेष्ठः लास्य उग्रो भयंकरः ॥
गुणत्रयविधानेन सत्त्वरजस्तमः क्रमात् ।

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सौम्याननकराणि च मांसपेशीविवर्जितः ॥
सदायौवनसम्पन्नो लास्यविग्रहलक्षणम् ।
अङ्गानि सौम्यरूपेण मुखोग्रमुग्रलक्षणम् ॥
देहविक्षिप्तमास्यं यत् विकटं तत् भयंकरम् ।
रुच्यनुसारतः कर्माङ्ग मण्डयेत् रूपमण्डने ॥

ŚiRaKo (pratimālakṣaṇa) 18cd–21

Three types of images are best: *lāsya, ugra, bhayaṅkara* (gentle, powerful, terrifying),

corresponding to the three *guṇa*s, *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* respectively.
Peaceful face, gentle hands, absence of muscles, always endowed with youthfulness,

these are the features of the gentle image (*lāsya-vigraha*).
The characteristics of a powerful image (*ugra*) are beautiful limbs and a fierce face.

A terrifying (*bhayaṅkara*) image has scattered limbs and a dreadful face.
The sculpting of the decoration of the parts of the body (of the image) can be done according to one's taste.
(Tr. B. Bäumer and R.P. Das)

The three types of images according to the quality are mentioned in the **Vāstusūtra Upaniṣad.**

... वाहनानि रूपस्य गुणान् प्रज्ञापयन्ति ।
गुणानुसृतं रूपत्रयम् ॥

सत्त्वात् सात्त्विकानि रजसो राजसानि तमसस्तामसानीति भेदाः । यानि रूपाणि सायुज्यं प्रददति तानि सात्त्विकरूपाणि । यानि कायसुखप्रदायकानि तानि राजसानि । यानि रूपाण्यरिं प्रति मृत्युप्रदानि तानि तामसानि ।
गुणानुक्रमेण वास्तुवेदस्य रूपविद्या ।

VSUp VI.18–19

The vehicles make known the intrinsic quality (*guṇa*) of the image.

According to the quality (*guṇa*) there are three types of images.

From *sattva* (*guṇa*) come sattvic, from *rajas* come rajasic, from *tamas* come tamasic images, that is their distinction. Images leading to union (with the divinity) are sattvic images. Those who procure bodily satisfaction are rajasic. Those images meant to give

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death in an enemy are tamasic. The science of image-making of this Vāstuveda follows the order of the qualities.
(Tr. A. Boner and B. Bäumer)

The images are also related with five great elements according to the respective qualities of the forms embodying the *bhāva*s.

प्रजापते रेते सर्वे देवा इमानि पञ्च महाभूतानि पृथिवीवाय्वाकाशाब्ज्योतिरित्येतानि जायन्त इति । तद्भूत-ज्ञानात् स्वस्वगुणभावरूप इव प्रचक्षते । तद्भूत-ज्ञानादुपदैवतभावाः सन्ति ।

... यमस्य द्वौ गुणौ, पालिकाऽवनाशिकेति । तस्य पालिका शक्तिराकूतिः, अवनाशिका मृत्युरिति ।

VSUp VI.21

All these gods and the five great elements earth, wind, ether, water and fire have been created by Prajāpati. According to the knowledge of these elements the respective qualities of the forms embodying the sentiment are shown. The nature of the secondary divinities is corresponding to the knowledge of these elements.

... Yama has two qualities, a protecting one and destructive one. His protecting Śakti is Ākūti and his destroying Śakti is Mṛtyu.
(Tr. A. Boner and B. Bäumer)

Kāmaśāstra, Pākaśāstra and Ratnaśāstra

In the **Kāma-Sūtra** *guṇa* conveys the sense of physical property, (*dravyaguṇaparīkṣā* – V.2.15) while the word is usually used in other places in the sense of good quality, excellence, eminence, bodily and mental qualities, qualification and the like as can be found in the words: *guṇavān* (I.4.45), *dūtaguṇa* (I.5.41), *nakhaguṇa* (II.4.18), *guṇavatī* (III.4.36), *guṇasāmya* (III.4.59), *guṇakathana* (V.4.30), etc. *Guṇa*s in *nāyaka*s are regarded as *subhagakaraṇa* (factors of good fortune) (VII.1.3).

In the words like *aguṇa* (I.5.30; VI.6.29) and *nirguṇa* (III.4.55) the term *guṇa* bears the sense as noted above.

In the **Pākadarpaṇa** or **Nalapāka**, the only work known to us on Pāka-Śāstra (art of cooking), *guṇa* is chiefly used in the sense of good qualities, refinement or beneficial effects: *kathyate kramaśo guṇam* (I.43), *bahuguṇaṃ* (*bhaktam*) (I.120), *sarvaguṇaḥ samāviṣṭaḥ* (I.126). In the sense of characteristic it is used in *ṣaḍ guṇāḥ* (II.16). In *dravyaguṇān* (V.22), it means physical qualities.

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In the **Ratna-Parīkṣā** (RP) of Īśvara-Dīkṣita and in the Ratna-Parīkṣā chapters, (LXVIII–LXXX) of the **Garuḍa Purāṇa** (GarPur) the word *guṇa* bears the sense of excellence, commendable feature, auspicious or good feature, virtue and property. The word is hardly used in any other sense – *ṣaḍguṇāḥ* (RP 18), *guṇāḥ sādhāraṇā maṇeḥ* (RP 80), *guṇadoṣau parīkṣya* (GarPur LXVIII.11), *guṇāguṇeṣu* (GarPur LXIX.24), *guṇavat* (GarPur LXIX.41; LXXI.17); *guṇasaṃgrahaḥ* (LXX.17), *guṇairyuktam* (LXXI.27), etc.

The **Ratna-Parīkṣā** mentions the *guṇa*s (attributes) of the five *bhūta*s (earth etc.) as existing in gems.

Classification

Guṇa, is classified into various categories in different discipline right from the Vedic period. Though in the **Atharvaveda** we find the concept in its primary sense of rope (*rajju*) yet in the same place an indication of its three constituents (*trivṛt*) is noted which is almost identical with the Samkhyan idea of three primordial qualities of living beings *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* following the same concept of Upanisadic path specially in the **Śvetāśvatara Upaniṣad.**

In the Alaṅkāra-Śāstra, Bhoja has classified *guṇa* into three classes: (i) *bāhya*, i.e. the *śabda-guṇa*, (ii) *ābhyantara*, i.e. the *arthaguṇa* and (iii) *vaiśeṣika guṇa*s or *doṣa-guṇa*s, i.e. which are actually cases of *doṣa*s but under certain circumstances these can be explained as *guṇa*s.

*Guṇa*s are found to have been divided into various classes in the *bhāṣya* of Praśastapāda (section on guṇa). These classes are mentioned in later works also. A few of these are mentioned here with brief details:

*Mūrta guṇa*s: These belong to corporeal substances. Colour, taste, smell, touch, etc. fall under this class. *Mūrta* means 'having *mūrti*, limited dimension (*paricchinna parimāṇa*).

*Amūrta guṇa*s: Cognition, pleasure, pain, etc. come under this group. These belong to the *ātman* (self) which is a non-material entity, having no limited dimension.

*Ubhaya guṇa*s: These belong to both material and non-material entities. Number, magnitude, separateness, etc. belong to the same category.

Sāmānya (generic) *guṇa*s: Number, magnitude, etc. existing in all kinds of substances can be grouped in the same line. These *guṇa*s do not distinguish one class from another (cf. BhāPari 91cd–92ab, for a list of these *guṇa*s).

Viśeṣa (specific or peculiar) *guṇa*s: A *viśeṣa guṇa* serves to differentiate

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its substrate (*āśraya*) from other substances (*viśeṣo'vacchedaḥ, tasmai prabhavanti ye guṇāste viśeṣaguṇāḥ, te hi svāśrayam itarasmāt vyavacchindanti* – Nyāyakandalī, (section on guṇa). Colour, taste, smell, touch, fluidity, cognition, etc. fall under this class (cf. BhāPari 90cd-91ab, for a list of these *guṇas*).

Anekāśrita guṇa: It always inheres in more than one substance. Conjunction, disjunction, etc. fall under this class.

Atīṇdriya guṇa: It is beyond external perception. Weight, merit, demerit and faculty fall under this class.

Pākaja guṇa: *Pāka* is the application of heat which effects changes in colour etc. Such changes are always perishable in the earth.

Apākaja guṇa: In the substances other than the earth colour, taste, touch and smell are not due to heat. They are either perishable (in perishable substances) or imperishable (in imperishable substances like the *paramāṇus*).

Anitya (perishable) *guṇas*: Number falls under this class. It is perishable in perishable substances. Number beginning with two are always perishable.

Nitya guṇa: Number, colour, taste, etc. are imperishable in imperishable substances.

Avyāpya (impervasive) *vṛtti guṇa*: Some of the *guṇas* are not pervasive, they do not pervade the whole of the substance but exist in a portion of the substance. Conjunction and disjunction are of this kind.

Vyāpya (pervasive) *vṛtti guṇa*: Colour is said to be pervasive as it pervades the whole substance. As the colour is pervasive, mixture of several colours in a substance is not accepted by the Vaiśeṣika teachers.

Ekendriyagrāhya guṇa (apprehended by one external sense only): Colour, taste, smell and touch belong to this class.

Dvīndriyagrāhya guṇa (apprehended by two senses– eye and touch only): Number, dimension, otherness, conjunction, disjunction, remoteness, proximity, etc. are the examples of this class.

Nature of the twenty-four *guṇas* is as follows:

Rūpa (colour): It is eternal in eternal (*nitya*) substances (*paramāṇus*) and non-eternal in non-eternal substances. It has seven varieties, viz. white, blue, red, yellow, green, brown (*kapiśa*) and variegated (*citra*). White is of two kinds: pale white (*abhāsvara-śukla*) (in water) and brilliant white (*bhāsvara-śukla*) (in light).

Rasa (taste): It is eternal in eternal substances and non-eternal in non-eternal substances. It has six varieties, viz. sweet, sour, saline, pungent, astrin-

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gent and bitter. In water it is sweet alone. There is no *citra-rasa.*

Gandha (smell): Usually it is divided into two kinds: fragrant (*surabhi*) and non-fragrant (*asurabhi*). A tripartite division of smell is found in the Bhāṣya on the **Nyāya-Sūtra** in the form of *heya* (forsakable), *upādeya* (acceptable) and *upekṣaṇīya* (negligible). There is no *citra gandha* (variegated smell).

Sparśa (feeling): It is of three kinds : cold, hot and neither-hot-nor-cold. It is to be carefully noted that the *guṇa sparśa* has nothing to do with hardness (*kāṭhinya*), mildness (*mṛdutva*) and the like.

Saṃkhyā (number): It is said to be the basis (*hetu*) for the awareness of unity (*ekatva*) and the like. It terminates in the number known as *parārdha.* Fraction does not seem to be a number according to this system.

Parimāṇa (magnitude): It is the special condition or ground for the use of measuring terms like smell etc. It is of four kinds: smallness, largeness, length and shortness.

Pṛthaktva (otherness): It is the uncommon condition or ground for a statement like 'A is different from B'.

Saṃyoga (conjunction): It is the uncommon condition or ground for the use of the phrase 'conjoined'. It is induced either by action or by conjunction.

Vibhāga (disjunction): It destroys conjunction. It is due either to action or to disjunction.

Paratva (remoteness): It is the uncommon condition or ground for the use of the expression 'far'. It is concerned with *diś* and *kāla.*

Aparatva (proximity): It is the uncommon condition or ground for the expression 'near'. It is concerned with *diś* and *kāla.*

Gurutva (heaviness): It is the non-intimate (*asamavāyin*) cause of the initial fall of a body.

Dravatva (fluidity): It is the non-intimate cause of the act of flowing. It is either natural (as in water) or induced (as in clarified butter). In the latter fluidity is due to the contact of heat.

Sneha (viscosity): It is the cause of lumping together of powdery substances.

Śabda (sound): It exists in *ākāśa* only. It is either of the nature of *dhvani* (tone) as found in drums etc. or of the nature of syllables as found in languages.

Buddhi (cognition): It is the ground of all kinds of usages. It has two varieties –*anubhava* (experience resulting directly from *pramāṇa*s) and *smṛti* (memory based on latent impressions or psychic trace).

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Sukha (pleasure): That which is felt as desirable or (more precisely) as desirable in itself, in other words, 'that which is desired for its own sake (*itarecchānadhīnecchāviṣayatvam* – Nyāyabodhinī on TarkSaṅg section on *sukha*).

Duḥkha (pain): That which is felt as undesirable or (more precisely) as undesirable in itself; in other words, 'that which is the object of aversion in itself' (*itaradveṣānadhīnadveṣaviṣayatvam* – Nyāyabodhinī on TarkSaṅg section on *duḥkha*).

Icchā (desire): It is the state of craving or longing for something; or it is that which is directly favourable to volition.

Dveṣa (aversion): It is antipathy towards something; or it is directly favourable to abstention from action.

Prayatna (volition): It is the same as exertion.

Dharma (merit): It is produced in the self by such acts as are enjoined by scriptures.

Adharma (demerit): It is produced in the self by such acts as are prohibited by scriptures.

Saṃskāra (faculty): It is of three kinds: *vega* (speed), *bhāvanā* (psychic trace) and *sthiti-sthāpaka* (elasticity).

Conclusion

Guṇa, a constituent, an inherent quality of substance, strewn as a part, different from genus and action, begins its semantic journey from a string being intertwined with various connotations related to the elements like *dhātu, dravya, indriya* and the different states of *sṛṣṭi-sthiti-pralaya*, comes up as a garland of pearls representing the flow of the Indian tradition. Various connotations of the term *guṇa* range from a string, strand, rope to a constituent of three qualities – *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, virtue, a design in sculpture, finally a line (→*rekhā*) in architecture. In conclusion the development of the term *guṇa* in Indian culture can be compared with the act of stringing the beads of different connotations and finally tying the string together which binds the interrelationship of all connotations related to the basic concept.

Ram Shankar Bhattacharya
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Appendix: DOṢA

by **Sukumar Chattopadhyay**

Overview

The term *doṣa* (m.) derived from the root *duṣ-* 'to become corrupted or changed', 'to be defiled', conveying the meaning of 'fault', 'deficiency', 'morbid element', 'disease', etc. is presented in the Indian tradition principally as an opposite to *guṇa*. But *doṣa* has its independent existence; it invariably destroys merits or excellences. It is not the absence of merit but a positive factor combating merit. In the sense of entity it is noted in various disciplines, e.g. Āyurveda etc.

The nature of *doṣa* and its varieties can be traced not only from the texts on rhetorics but also in the Yoga and other philosophies. The views about *doṣa* found in rhetorics are extensively discussed in relation to words like *pada, vākya* and *rasa*, etc. Similarly, there are a number of faults (*doṣas*) in pronunciation as mentioned in the various Śikṣās. Discussion on *doṣa* is also found in the Arthaśāstra, various Nītiśāstras and the works on Dharmaśāstras.

Āyurveda deals with *doṣa* in a technical sense which is discussed here separately. In Purāṇas and other similar literature there are lists of *doṣas* concerning various factors (e.g. list of *kāvya-doṣas* in AgPur ch. CCCXLVII).

The concept of *doṣa*, as an opposite of →*guṇa* perhaps originated from the idea of *doṣa* used in feminine gender (*doṣā*) in the Vedic literature to denote darkness etc. *Guṇa* represents light while *doṣa* expresses the sense of darkness. The Buddhist and Jaina philosophies support the Nyāya concept of *doṣa* as *rāga, dveṣa* and *moha*.

In the Arts also we find the defects of stone, image, etc. and in music defects of singers bearing the idea of not only negation but also deficiency.

Etymology and Related Words

The term *doṣa* is derived from the root *duṣ-* 'to become corrupted' (*vaikṛtye*), 'to be defiled' with the suffix *ghañ*. Pāṇini has given two sūtras (VI.4.90–91)

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on the regular and optional use of the verbal base *duṣ-* (IV.76). He has also mentioned the term *doṣin* (*duṣ-* + *ghinuṇ* – Pā III.2.142) 'guilty of an offence'. The relation between the root *duṣ-* and the preposition *duṣ* is also noticeable. The prefix or preposition *duṣ* also denotes badness.

In the **Amara Kośa** *doṣa* is used to denote three body humours, *vāta*, etc. (*doṣa vātādika* – AmKo III.3.225). The terms *garhā* and *garhaṇā* are used as synonyms of *doṣa* (VaiKo III.6.193). The term *doṣa* is also used to denote *dūṣaṇa* and *pāpa* 'vice' (MedKo XXXI.15).

Some words related or compounded with *doṣa* are as follows: *doṣadvaya* 'a combination of two evils', *doṣatraya* 'any combination of three defects, vibration of the three humours', *doṣaghna* 'removing the bad humours', *doṣajña* 'wise' (Ragh I.93), etc.

Layers of Meaning

Doṣa 'demerit' in its non-technical sense exists in all the created matters. Most of the meanings of the term originate from the Vedic concept of darkness. *Doṣa* is actually a morbidity (*vikāra*) of →*prakṛti* which is very clear in the Āyurveda as the morbid elements, three bodily humours, viz. *vāta, pitta* and *kapha.* These are the deviations from the natural state of wind, etc. causing diseases. Six *doṣa*s of a person, viz. *nidrā, tandrā*, etc. are the deviations from the natural state of waking etc. which are blemishable in the society. *Doṣa*s are relative to *guṇa.* Hence it is to be noted that some *doṣa*s are sometimes accepted as *guṇa*s in a certain situation while some *guṇa*s are treated as *doṣa*s. For example, *rāga* (devotion) is →*guṇa* for a good work but the same *rāga* may be *doṣa* when it is an addiction to bad work.

Most of the meanings of *doṣa*, viz. fault, vice, deficiency, disadvantage, inconvenience, want, deviation, loss, demerit, bodily humours, etc. are interrelated and based on the concept of *vikāra* which is actually the original sense of the same term.

Development of the Concept

In the Vedic Saṃhitās the term *doṣa* in the feminine gender (*doṣā*) is used in the sense of night (*doṣāvastar dhiyā vayam* – ṚV I.1.7). In the **Atharvaveda** the use of the root *duṣ-* 'to spoil is mentioned as:

दुष्ट्यै हि त्वा भत्स्यामि दूषयिष्यामि काववम् ।
उदाशवो रथा इव शपथेभिः सरिष्यथ ॥

AV III.9.5

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Since I shall bind thee (on) for spoiling I shall spoil the *Kābava* (evil spirit); ye shall go up with curses, like swift chariots. (Tr. W.D. Whitney)

The meaning of this *mantra* is enigmatic. The term *kābava* denotes roasted meat as well as evil spirit. In the **Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇayaka** the root *duṣ-* is used to denote harm.

नास्य प्रजा दुष्यति जायमाना न शैलगो भवति न पापकृत्या ।
नान्यन्मिथस्तस्य कुलेषु जायत इरामणिं बैल्वं यो विभर्ति ।

ŚāṅkhĀr XII.5

No offspring of his is harmed in birth, no robber, no evil deed is there, nothing else amiss happens in his families, who bears a comforting amulet of Bilva. (Tr. A.B. Keith)

In the narrative of Indra-Pratardana and Virocana, Prajāpati taught Indra that the Self which moves in dream is free from all the defects and sins of body.

नैवैषोऽस्य दोषेण दुष्यति ।

ChUp VIII.10.1

Nor indeed is it tainted by the defects of this (body).
(Tr. Gambhirananda)

In the context of explaining yogic methods for attaining purity the **Maitrāyaṇī Upaniṣad** says that the *brahmavit* is free from defects.

यथा पर्वतमादीप्तं नाश्रयन्ति मृगद्विजाः ।
तद्वद् ब्रह्मविदो दोषा नाश्रयन्ति कदाचन ॥

MaitUp VI.18

As to a mountain that's enflamed
Animals and birds do not resort –
So, with the Brahma-Knowers, faults
Do never any shelter find. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

It is also mentioned in the same text that the removal of desire, nescience and other blemishes (like *adhyavasāya* etc.) leads the aspirant to liberation.

अध्यवसायस्य दोषक्षयात् विमोक्षः ।

MaitUp VI.30

Liberation results from the destruction of the faulty determination (and the like). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

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In the **Nāradīya Śikṣā** the faults or defects of Vedic chanting or recitation of Vedic *mantras* are noted, as follows:

शङ्कितं भीतमुद्घुष्टमव्यक्तमनुनासिकम् ।
काकस्वरं शिरसिगतं तथा स्थानविवर्जितम् ॥
विस्वरं विरसं चैव विश्लिष्टं विषमाहतं ।
व्याकुलं तालहीनं च गीतिदोषाश्चतुर्दश ॥

NārŚik I.3.12–13

Suspicious, frightened, extremely sounded, indistinctness, undue nasalised, a shrill or repressed tone, undue cerebralized, avoidance of the places of articulation, recited with improper accent, harshness, creating undue separation between words, irregularly stressed, uttering confused sounds and devoid of rhythm – these are the fourteen faults of Vedic chanting or singing.

In the Śrauta literature the term *doṣa* conveys the sense of drawback or discrepancy. The optional rite once commenced is considered as equal to the obligatory rite and it should be performed completely and timely. The sacrificer would be at fault if he leaves it in the middle of the ritual performances:

दोषश्चासमाप्तौ स्यात्सामान्यात् ।

KātŚrSū I.4.4

It will be a drawback (on the part of the sacrificer) (if the optional rite) is not completed (since the incompletion of a sacrifice (once) commenced is condemned by the *Śiṣṭa*s) in the same manner as is the case with the obligatory rites. (Tr. H.G. Ranade)

While performing the optional sacrifices, if the time occurs for an obligatory sacrifice, one should stop the performance of the former and complete the latter; then continue again the left out rites of the optional sacrifice. Because the obligatory sacrifices are to be performed at their proper time without fail, since the non-performance of these rites at their proper time gives rise to particular discrepancies (*pravṛtte niyataṃ, doṣa-viśeṣāt* – KātŚrSū I.5.14).

According to Patañjali there is no common features of all kinds of faults (*na hi doṣāṇāṃ lakṣaṇamasti* – Mahābh I.1.391). A corrupt (*duṣṭa*) barley (*yava*) is called *yavānī*, which is not a variety of barley but it is a different grain having the shape of barley and this possessing of similarity is called *doṣa* (corruption or blemish) (Mahābh IV.1.49).

In the **Mahābhārata** six *doṣa*s of a person are mentioned:

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षड् दोषाः पुरुषेणेह हातव्या भूतिमिच्छता ।
निद्रा तन्द्री भयं क्रोध आलस्यं दीर्घसूत्रता ॥

MBh V. 33.66

Six *doṣa*s (demerits), viz. sleepiness (*nidrā*), drowsiness (*tandrī*), fear (*bhaya*), anger (*krodha*), idleness (*ālasya*) and procrastination (*dīrghasūtratā*) should be avoided by a person who desires wealth (*bhūti*) in this world.

There are also discussions on the various types of *doṣa*s, e.g. *bhūdoṣa* (MBh I.2.10).

In the **Bhagavad-Gītā**, birth, death, old age, disease and miseries are accepted as *doṣa*s the knowledge of which is essential for liberation:

इन्द्रियार्थेषु वैराग्यमनहङ्कार एव च ।
जन्ममृत्युजराव्याधि दुःखदोषानुदर्शनम् ॥

BhG XIII.8

Non-attachment with regard to objects of the senses, and also absence of egotism, seeing evil in birth, death, old age, diseases and miseries – (this is spoken of as knowledge). (Tr. Gambhirananda)

In the **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** the interrelatedness and interchangeableness of →*guṇa* and *doṣa* are explained as follows:

क्वचिद् गुणोऽपि दोषः स्याद् दोषोऽपि विधिना गुणः ।
गुणदोषार्थ नियमस्तद्भिदामेव बाधते ॥

BhāgPur XI.21.16

In some cases even a virtue turns out to be a fault and vice versa in the light of scriptural ordinance. (In this way) the scriptural ordinance determining the goodness or otherwise of a particular object cuts at the root of the distinction (of good and bad) itself.
(Tr. C.L. Goswami)

In the **Yoga-Sūtra** and Tantric literature, the Ayurvedic concept of *tridoṣa* is traced in the following:

वातपित्तश्लेष्माणस्त्रयो दोषाः ।

YSūBh III.29

The humours are three in number, viz. wind, bile and phlegm.
(Tr. H. Aranya)

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वातपित्तकफा दोषाः ... ॥

ŚāTil I.33c

*Doṣa*s (the three humours of the body) are *vāta, pitta* and *kapha.*

अभिभवति च दोषानासनं श्रीमयूरम् ।

HyPrad I.31

The Mayūrāsana overcomes the imbalance of the humours.
(Tr. S. Iyangar)

In the **Nyāya-Sūtra** there is the mention of three groups of defects – →*rāga* (desire), *dveṣa* (hatred/aversion) and *moha* (illusion) (NySū IV.1.3). The defects, e.g. untruthfulness, jealousy, deceit, avarice, etc. are influenced by these three groups of defects. The nature of *doṣa* is *pravartanālakṣaṇā* (NySū I.1.18), i.e. inciting nature is the distinguishing feature. Defects appear due to the false knowledge. Whenever there is ignorance, there is attachment and aversion. The objects of cognition beginning from body and ending with pain are the causes of defects.

According to the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra** (VI.1.8) demerits arise from the association with an impure person. Śabara says (on the **Mīmāṃsā-Sūtra** I.1.5), the causal factor of misapprehension is the blemish which exists in both, viz.: (i) the mind with the sense organs and (ii) the object. The mind, sense organs and the objects may have any defect or deficiency which causes the wrong knowledge.

The three well known *doṣa*s described in the Mīmāṃsaka school (MīmSū X.5.54) are: (i) *asvārthagrahaṇa* (acceptance of what is not expressed by the text), (ii) *parārthakalpanā* (assumption of a different meaning) and (iii) *prāptabādha* (exclusion of what is known to be admissible).

Sāṃkhya philosophy although discusses *guṇa* in detail, is almost silent about the *doṣa.*

In the Vedānta philosophy *doṣa* conveys the idea of imperfection.

अयं हि जीवः स्वयमेव रागद्वेषादिदोषप्रयुक्तः ।

BrSūŚBh II.3.41

As the individual soul has motives in its own imperfections, such as passion, aversion and so on ... (Tr. G. Thibaut)

In the **Manu Smṛti** we find the enumeration of two types of vice, of which ten are *kāmaja* 'originating from the lust' and eight are *krodhaja* 'originating from the wrath'. Here the term *vyasana* is used in the place of '*doṣa*'.

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मृगयाक्षो दिवास्वप्नः परिवादः स्त्रियो मदः ।
तौर्यत्रिकं वृथाट्या च कामजो दशको गणः ॥
पैशुन्यं साहसं द्रोह, ईर्ष्यासूयार्थदूषणम् ।
वाग्दण्डजं च पारुष्यं क्रोधजोऽपि गणोऽष्टकः ॥

Manu VII.47–48

Hunting, gambling, sleeping by day, censoriousness, (excess with) women, drunkenness, (an inordinate love for) dancing, singing and music and useless travel are the tenfold set (of vices) springing from love of pleasure.

Tale-bearing, violence, treachery, envy, slandering, (unjust) seizure of property, reviling and assault are the eightfold set (of vices) produced by wrath. (Tr. G. Bühler)

The *doṣa*s (evils or taints or sins) produced from sensual attachments could be destroyed through the Yogic practices, viz. *prāṇāyāma, dhāraṇā, pratyāhārā* and *dhyāna.*

दह्यन्ते ध्मायमानानां धातूनां हि यथा मलाः ।
तथेन्द्रियाणां दह्यन्ते दोषाः प्राणस्यनिग्रहात् ॥
प्राणायामैर्दहेद्दोषान्धारणाभिश्च किल्विषम् ।
प्रत्याहारेण संसर्गान्ध्यानेनानीश्वरान्गुणान् ॥

Manu VI.71–72

For as the impurities of metallic ores, melted in the blast (of a furnace), are consumed, even so the taints of the organs are destroyed through the suppression of the breath.

Let him destroy the taints through suppressions of breath, (the production of) sin by fixed attention, all sensual attachments by restraining (his senses and organs), and all qualities that are not lordly by meditation. (Tr. G. Bühler)

Polluting of the sense-organs can be stopped by the yogic breath control (*prāṇāyāma*) and the same idea is supported by **Devī Purāṇa** (X.5.8) and **Amṛtanādopaniṣat** (7).

In the **Arthaśāstra** Kauṭilya defines *doṣa* or *vyasana* as follows:

गुणप्रातिलोम्यमभावः प्रदोषः प्रसङ्गः पीडा वा व्यसनम् ।

ArthŚ VIII.1.3

That which is just reverse to *guṇa* (*guṇa prātilomya*) or absence of virtues (*abhāva*) corruption (*pradoṣa*), excessive lust (*prasaṅga*) and

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disease (*pīḍā* all these should go by the name *vyasana*, the vice. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Kauṭilya cautions the king to remove a vitiated person or corrupted minister immediately from his administration (ArthŚ VIII.1.6). There is also mention of a serious punishment for *arthadūṣaṇa*:

> वृत्तिविलोपस्त्वर्थदूषणम् । अदानमादानं विनाशः परित्यागो वा अर्थस्येत्यर्थदूषणम् ।
>
> ArthŚ VIII.3.23–24
>
> *Arthadūṣaṇa* (here) stands for *vṛttivilopa* (i.e. extinction of one's livelihood). Or *adāna*, i.e. act of withholding, *ādāna* 'seizing', *vināśa* 'spoiling' and *parityāga* 'foregoing' – these also may be called *arthadūṣaṇa*. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

According to the **Manu Smṛti** (VII.48), *arthadūsaṇa* is treated as one of the eight *krodhaja vyasana* 'vices proceeding from wrath'.

'In the **Bṛhat Saṃhitā** the term *doṣa* is used to convey the meaning of offence or guilty:

> दम्पत्योर्व्युत्क्रमे दोषः समः शास्त्रे प्रतिष्ठितः ।
> नरा न समवेक्षन्ते तेनात्र वरमङ्गनाः ॥
>
> BṛSam LXXIV.12
>
> It has been laid down in Dharmaśāstra (codes of conduct) that the offence of both husband and wife will be equal, if both go astray. But men pay no heed to their sins (while women do). Hence women are superior in this respect. (Tr. M.R. Bhat)

The faults (*doṣa*) connected with the directions of a house, can bring calamities or problems to the owner according to the same text (BṛSam LIII.115–116).

In Buddhist philosophy the term *doṣa* is treated as in both Nyāya and Āyurveda, i.e. the group of *rāga, dveṣa* and *moha*, and three bodily humours, *vāta, pitta* and *kapha*.

In the context of craving, the **Dhammapada** explains that →*rāga* (lust), *doṣa* (ill will), *moha* (ignorance) and *icchā* (covetousness) spoils all the qualities of all beings.

> तिणदोसानि खेत्तानि, रागदोसा अयं पजा ।
> तस्मा हि वीतरागेसु, दिन्नं होति महप्फलं ॥
>
> DhPad XXIV.23 (356)

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Weeds damage fields; lust spoils all beings. Therefore, giving to those free from lust yields great benefit. (Tr. D.M. Tin)

In the context of discussion on sufferings three kinds of *doṣa*s 'bodily humours', viz. *vāta, pitta* and *kapha* are treated as the causes of sufferings.

अट्ठहि, महाराज, कारणेहिवेदयितानिउप्पज्जन्ति, येहि कारणेहि पुथुसत्ता वेदना वेदयन्ति । कतमेहि अट्ठहि ? वातसमुट्ठानानि पि खो, महाराज, इधेकच्चानि वेदयितानि उप्पज्जन्ति, पित्तसमुट्ठानानि पि खो, महाराज पे० ... सेम्हसमुट्ठानानि पि खो, महाराज ... पे० ... सन्निपातिकानि पि खो, महाराज ... पे० ... उतुपरिणामजानि पि खो, महाराज ... पे० विसमाहारजानि पि खो, महाराज ... पे० ... ओपक्कमिकानि पि खो, महाराज ... पे० कम्मविपाकजानि पि खो, महाराज, इधेकच्चानि वेदयितानि उप्पज्जन्ति । इमेहि खो, महाराज, अट्ठहि कारणेहि पुथुसत्ता वेदना वेदयन्ति ... ।

MilPañ (Meṇḍaka Pañha) IV.1.8

(O King!) There are eight causes by which sufferings arise, by which many beings suffer pain. And what are the eight? Superabundance of wind, and of bile, and of phlegm, the union of these humours, variations in temperature, the avoiding of dissimilarities, external agency, and *karma*. From each of these there are some sufferings that arise, and these are the eight causes by which many beings suffer pain. (Tr. T.W. Rhys Davids)

According to Jainism the existence of the group of *rāga, dveṣa* and *moha* is due to the *doṣa* of *jīva* (individual) (cf. *doṣāśca rāgādayaḥ* – Samādhi Śataka Ṭīkā V.225.3).

In the commentary on **Dravyasaṅgraha** *doṣa* is explained as:

निर्दोषपरमात्मनो भिन्ना रागादयो दोषाः ... ।

Comm. on DSaṅg verse 14

Doṣa means *rāga* (attachment) etc. which are different from the faultless *paramātman.*

The **Anuyogadvāra** of the Jainas records the thirty two *doṣa*s from ethical, logical and literary point of view which must be avoided in an expression. These are: *anṛta, upaghātajanaka, nirarthaka, apārthaka, chala, druhila, nissāra, adhika, ūna, punarukta, vyāhata, ayukta, krama-bhinna, vacana-bhinna, vibhakti-bhinna, liṅga-bhinna, anabhihita, apada, svabhāva-hīna, vyavahita, kāla-doṣa,*

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yati-doṣa, chavi-doṣa, samaya-viruddha, nirhetuka, arthāpatti-doṣa, samāsa-doṣa, upamā-doṣa, rūpaka-doṣa, nirdeśa-doṣa, padārtha-doṣa and *sandhi-doṣa.*

In the **Hitopadeśa** *guṇa* and *doṣa* are mentioned in juxtaposition as an opposite of each. One should ascertain merits or demerits of a thing or person before favouring or giving punishment.

गुणदोषावनिश्चित्य विधिर्न ग्रहनिग्रहे ।
स्वनाशाय यथा न्यस्तो दर्पात्सर्पमुखे करः ॥

Hit II.8.142

To award favour or punishment without ascertaining one's merit or fault is not the policy; (such a course) leads to one's destruction like the hand thrust into a serpent's mouth through vanity.
(Tr. M.R. Kale)

To see the merits in demerits is the sign of well-attachment. It has been observed that a well-attached person mostly gives a good colouring to his beloved person's defect.

असेवके चानुरक्तिर्दानं सप्रियभाषणम् ।
सुरक्तेश्वरचिह्नानि दोषेऽपि गुणसंग्रहः ॥

Hit II.2.60

... attachment even when one does not serve, making a donation with sweet words and noting one's merits even when one is at fault – these are the signs of a lord well-attached. (Tr. M.R. Kale)

Poetics

In poetics and dramaturgy the development of the concept of *doṣa* is discussed elaborately. Bharata observes that →*guṇas* are contrary to *doṣas* or opposites of *doṣas*. Before saying about the *guṇas* he describes the ten *doṣas*:

गूढार्थमर्थान्तरमर्थहीनं भिन्नार्थमेकार्थमभिप्लुतार्थम् ।
न्यायादपेतं विषमं विसन्धि शब्दच्युतं वै दश काव्यदोषाः ॥

NŚ XVI.88

The ten defects in the poetical compositions are, (a) *gūḍhārtha* (circumlocution – hidden meaning), (b) *arthāntaram* (conveying another sense – superfluous expression), (c) *arthahīnam* (meaningless want of significance), (d) *bhinnārtham* (conveying different

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meaning, defective significance), (e) *ekārtham* (tautology), (f) *abhiplutārtha* (want of synthesis), (g) *nyāyādapetam* (logical defect), (h) *viṣama* (unevenness – metrical defect), (i) *visandhi* (hiatus) and (j) *śabdacyuta* (lapse in a word slang).

*Doṣa*s are explained here as the negations of positive excellences (*guṇa*s).

Bhāmaha in his **Kāvyālaṅkāra** has given a description of the two sets of *doṣa*s. In the first set ten *doṣa*s are: *neyārtha, kliṣṭa, anyārtha, avācaka, ayuktimat,* and *gūḍhaśabdābhidhāna, śrutiduṣṭa* (offensive to the ear), *arthaduṣṭa* (of improper meaning), *kalpanāduṣṭa* (objectionable construction) and *śrutikaṣṭa* (painful to the ear – cacophony) (I.37, 47). In the second set he has also mentioned that these faults are not desirable in poetry: *apārtha, vyartha, ekārtha, sasaṃśaya, apakrama, śabdahīna, yatibhraṣṭa, bhinnavṛtta, visandhi, deśakālakalālokanyāyāgamaviradhi* and *pratijñāhetudṛṣṭāntahīna* (IV.1.2). He has also noted that a *doṣa* sometimes gets converted into an excellence (I.54–58).

Daṇḍin in his **Kāvyādarśa** observes ten faults or demerits in *kāvya*s, because these distract beauty and *rasaniṣpatti* and even produce undesirable meanings in *kāvya*s. He also mentions that all demerits as such can become *guṇa*s. Having said *guṇa*s of *kāvya* (ch. I) and *arthālaṅkāra* (ch. II), *śabdālaṅkāra* (ch. III), etc. he speaks about its *doṣa* or *heyadharma*. His definitions correspond to those of Bhāmaha both in idea and expression.

अपार्थं व्यर्थमेकार्थं ससंशयमपक्रमम् ।
शब्दहीनं यतिभ्रष्टं भिन्नवृत्तं विसन्धिकम् ॥
देश-काल-कला-लोक-न्यायागमविरोधि च ।
इति दोषा दशैवेति वज्ज्यार्ः काव्येषु सूरिभिः ॥

Kāvyād III.125–126

The ten *doṣa*s, viz.: *apārtha, vyartha, ekārtha, sasaṃśaya, apakrama, śabdahīna, yatibhraṣṭa, bhinnavṛtta, visandhika* and *deśakāla-kalā-loka-nyāyāgamavirodhi* speeches (i.e. counter to or contrary to country, time, art, usage, logic and *śāstra*s) should be avoided in a *kāvya* by the poets.

According to Vāmana defects (*doṣa*s) are those elements the characteristics of which are opposite to those of the *guṇa*s (*guṇaviparyayātmāno doṣāḥ* – KāvyālSū II.1). This is against the view of Bharata. The positive elements in poetic composition are *guṇa*s and not the *doṣa*s which are merely negations of *guṇa*s. He has presented four-fold classification of *doṣa*s, (i) *pada-doṣa* (defects related to words), (ii) *padārtha-doṣa* (defects related to ideas of words), (iii) *vākya-doṣa* (defects characterising sentences) and (iv) *vākyārtha-doṣa* (defects disfiguring the sense of sentences).

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Accepting *śabda* and *artha* as two elements of poetry, Rudraṭa has classified *doṣa*s into two main categories – (i) *śabda-doṣa* and (ii) *artha-doṣa*. Again he has divided the *śabda-doṣa*s into *pada* and *vākya*. The seven *pada-doṣa*s are *asamartha, apratīta, visandhi, viparīta-kalpanā, grāmya, avyutpanna* and *deśya* and four *vākya-doṣa*s are *saṅkīrṇa, garbhita, gatārtha* and *analaṃkāra*.

Ānandavardhana has mentioned a category of *doṣa*s called *rasa-doṣa*s.

Bhoja has presented in his **Śṛṅgāra Prakāśa** three categories of *doṣa*: *pada-doṣa, vākya-doṣa* and *vākyārtha-doṣa*, each of which is divided into sixteen. The sixteen *pada-doṣa*s are: *asādhu, aprayukta, kaṣṭa, anarthaka, anyārthaka, apuṣṭārthaka, asamartha, apratīta, kliṣṭa, gūḍhārtha, neyārtha, sandigdha, viruddha, aprayojaka, deśya* and *grāmya*. Sixteen *vākya-doṣa*s are: *śabdahīna, punaruktimat, apakrama, bhinnavṛtta, yatibhraṣṭa, visandhi, vyākīrṇa, saṅkīrṇa, garbhita, apada, aśarīra, unopama, adhikopama, bhinnaliṅga, bhinnavacana*, and *śleṣādiguṇaviparīta*. Sixteen *vākyārtha-doṣa*s are: *apārtha, vyartha, ekārtha, sasaṃśaya, apakrama, khinna, atimātra, paruṣa, virasa, nyūnopama, adhikopama, asadṛśopama, aprasiddhopama, niralaṅkāra, aślīla* and *viruddha*. Most of these are noted also in the previous works on poetics. He has also told about *doṣa-guṇa*s or *vaiśeṣika-guṇa*s which are cases of *doṣa*s turning out to be *guṇa*s under certain circumstances.

The **Daśa Rūpaka** also has recorded a dramatic situation named *mṛdava* where concept of *guṇa-doṣa* becomes reverse to the normal idea of the same. Here *doṣa* becomes *guṇa* and vice versa.

दोषा गुणा गुणा दोषा यत्र स्युर्मृदवं हि तत् ।

DaRū III.21ab (cf. SāDar VI.275)

Mṛdava is that where faults are considered to be merits while merits are regarded as faults. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

In the IInd act of **Abhijñānaśākuntalam** all the faults are described as merits by the army-general while he is explaining to the king the advantages of hunting (AbhŚāk II.5).

The next noteworthy contribution on the concept of *doṣa*, is from Mahimabhaṭṭa. He defines *doṣa* in his **Vyaktiviveka**, generally as *anaucitya* and it pertains to *śabda* and *artha*.

Mammaṭa, a follower of Ānandavardhana, describes the idea of *doṣa* clearly. According to him *doṣa* is that which spoils the essence or the chief element, i.e. the →*rasa*. He has treated *doṣa*s as *śabda-doṣa, artha-doṣa, varṇa-doṣa* and *racanā-doṣa*.

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To sum up, *doṣa* being contrary to *guṇa*, and bearing technical sense in different disciplines, presents a very rich conception in Indian literature. *Doṣa*s are chiefly the blemishes existing in the body and →*prāṇa*, so these can be driven away to get the best qualities through *prāṇāyāma*:

प्राणायामैर्दहेद् दोषान् ।

DPur X.5.8

Blemishes should be eradicated through (the practice of) *prāṇāyāma* (yogic breath control). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Doṣa in Āyurveda

by **L.M. Singh**

The concept of *pañca-mahābhūta* is essentially a categorization of the physical world according to our perceptive faculties. That which exists is *bhūta* and that which comes within our perceptive faculties is *mahābhūta*. *Pañca-mahābhūta* does not only include matter or substance, it also includes other aspects of the physical world as space and energy. Time →'*kāla*' is not included in *pañca-mahābhūta* because time is essentially a phenomenal sequence in matter, energy and space. Thus →*ākāśa* is indicative of space in the broadest term, →*vāyu* of motion or kinetic energy, →*tejas* of radiant and thermal energy, →*jala* and →*pṛthivī* are indicative of liquid and solid forms of matter and their respective perceptive awareness is through our sensory faculties – sound, touch, sight, taste and smell.

Further in this existential categorization whereas space '*ākāśa*' forms the milieu and *pṛthivī* the substratum; other three *mahābhūta*s represent the dynamic aspects. Any phenomenon is either relative to space points brought about by motion or relative to its physical state or form. These dynamic aspects have been emphasized in the concept of *tridoṣa*. Thus whereas *vāyu* represents the kinetic aspect of phenomenon brought about by motion, *tejas* represents transformations brought about by radiant and thermal energy. *Jala* and *pṛthivī* (as *kapha*) are indicative of the cohesive forces which bring about changes in the form.

Thus, whereas *pañca-mahābhūta* forms the material or structural basis of the phenomenal world, *tridoṣa* has been conceived as its operative and energetic aspect. The sustenance of the phenomenal world has been compared with the sustenance of our body.

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विसर्गादानविक्षेपैः सोमसूर्यानिला यथा ।
धारयन्ति जगद्देहं कफपित्तानिलास्तथा ॥

SuSam SūSthā XXI.8

As the moon, sun and air sustain the world by their function of emission, absorption and movements similarly *kapha*, *pitta* and *vāyu* also sustain the body. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

Further *tridoṣa* has been mentioned as the cause of genesis, maintenance and dissolution as well.

वातपित्तश्लेष्माण एव देहसंभवहेतवः ।...शरीरमिदं धार्यतेऽगारमिव स्थूणाभिस्तिसृभिः, अतश्च त्रिस्थूणमाहुरेके । त एव च व्यापन्नाः प्रलयहेतवः...नृते देहः कफादस्ति न पित्तान्न च मारुतात् ।

SuSam SūSthā XXI.3–4a

Vāyu, *pitta* and *śleṣman* are the causes of genesis of the body. They maintain the body like a house – supported on these pillars, that is the reason why the body is called *tristhūṇa* by some, when vitiated they cause destruction. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

The body can neither exist without *kapha*, nor without *pitta*, nor without *vāyu*.

They are also the factors causing disease in the body is brought out in all classics of Āyurveda.

वायुः पित्तं कफश्चोक्तः शारीरो दोषसंग्रहः ।

CarSam SūSthā I.57ab

'*Vāyu*', '*pitta*' and '*kapha*' are the pathogenic factors in the body.

वायुः पित्तं कफश्चेति त्रयो दोषाः समासतः ॥
विकृताविकृता देहं घ्नन्ति ते वर्तयन्ति च ।

AṣṭH SūSthā I.6cd-7ab

Vāyu, pitta and *kapha* are the three pathogenic factors in all, they maintain or destroy the body in their normal or deranged state.

The concept of *tridoṣa* has its beginning in the **Atharvaveda** (I.12.3) in which diseases are caused by *abhraja* water, *vātaja* air or by *śuṣmaḥ* fire.

Tridoṣa have been directly derived from *pañca-mahābhūta*.

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वाय्वाकाशधातुभ्यां वायुः । आग्नेयं पित्तं । अम्भः पृथिवीभ्यां श्लेष्मा ।

AṣṭSaṅg SūSthā XX.3

Vāyu (*doṣa*) has been derived from *vāyu* and *ākāśa*, (*mahābhūta*), *pitta* from *agni*, and from *jala* and *pṛthivī*, *śleṣman*.

Thus although these *tridoṣa*s are the products of *pañca-mahābhūta*, they represent their dynamic aspects. This is further brought out by the etymological derivation of *vāyu, pitta* and *kapha*.

तत्र 'वा' गतिगन्धनयोरिति धातुः, 'तप' सन्तापे, 'श्लिष' आलिङ्गने, एतेषां कृद्विहितैः प्रत्ययैर्वात, पित्तं श्लेष्मेति च रूपाणि भवन्ति ।

SuSam SūSthā XXI.5

The words *vāta, pitta* and *śleṣman* are derived respectively from the roots *vā-* which means movement or smell, *tapa* indicating heat and *śliṣa* 'to embrace' with the *kṛt* suffixes.

सर्व एव खलु वातपित्तश्लेष्माणः प्रकृतिभूताः पुरुषमव्यापन्नेन्द्रियं बलवर्ण-सुखोपपन्नमायुषा महतोपपादयन्ति सम्यगेवाचरिता धर्मार्थकामा इव निःश्रेयसेन महता पुरुषमिह चामुष्मिंश्च लोके; विकृतास्त्वेनं महता विपर्ययेणोपपादयन्ति ऋतवस्त्रय इव विकृतिमापन्ना लोकमशुभेनोपघातकाल इति ॥

CarSam SūSthā XII.13

All *vāta, pitta* and *kapha*, in normal state, endow the person with unaffected sense organs, strength, complexion and happiness and also with a long life-span as virtue, wealth and enjoyment pursued properly endow the person with great well-being here and in the world hereafter; on the contrary, in abnormal state, they give rise to severe abnormalities as three seasons, when abnormal, produce harmful effects in the world particularly at the time of final destruction. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Thus →*vāyu* represents the kinetic, *pitta* the radiant and *kapha* the cohesive forces.

Further derivation of *tridoṣa* as dynamic aspects of *pañca-mahābhūta* is indicated by the preponderance of *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* in *pañca-mahābhūta* (see *guṇa* in Āyurveda).

Tridoṣa being derived from *pañca-mahābhūta* also exhibit three attributes according to its constituents *pañca-mahābhūta. Vāyu-doṣa* having its constituents →*ākāśa* and *vāyu-mahābhūta* exhibit their attributes; *pitta* the attributes of *agni, jala* and *kapha* the attributes of *jala* and *pṛthivī*.

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रूक्षः शीतो लघुः सूक्ष्मश्चलोऽथ विशदः खरः ।
विपरीतगुणैर्द्रव्यैर्मारुतः संप्रशाम्यति ॥
सस्नेहमुष्णं तीक्ष्णं च द्रवमम्लं सरं कटु ।
विपरीतगुणैः पित्तं द्रव्यैराशु प्रशाम्यति ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.59–60

Vāta, which is rough, cold, light, subtle, mobile, nonslimy, clear, and coarse is pacified by drugs with opposite properties.
Pitta, which is unctuous, hot, sharp, liquid, sour, mobile and is soon pacified by drugs having opposite qualities.

गुरुशीतमृदुस्निग्धमधुरस्थिरपिच्छिलाः ।
श्लेष्मणः प्रशमं यान्ति विपरीतगुणैर्गुणाः ॥

CarSam SūSthā I.61

Qualities of *kapha*, which are heavy, cold, soft, unctuous, sweet, stable, slimy are relieved by medicines of opposite qualities.

Suśruta has also described the attributes of *vāta, pitta* and *kapha* in similar words with emphasis on some other aspects (SuSam NiSthā I.7b-8a, SuSam SūSthā XXI.11; 15).

Against the background of their attributes *tridoṣa* perform important functions in the body.

उत्साहोच्छ्वासनिःश्वासचेष्टा धातुगतिः समा ।
समो मोक्षो गतिमतां वायोः कर्माविकारजम् ॥

CarSam SūSthā XVIII.49

When *vāta* is in its normal state it reflects itself in the form of enthusiasm, inspiration, expiration, movements, normal metabolic transformation of tissues and proper elimination of excreta.
(Tr. R.K. Sharma and Bhagwan Das)

Further all activities in the body have been ascribed to *vāyu*:

सर्वा हि चेष्टा वातेन स प्राणः प्राणिनां स्मृतः ।
तेनैव रोगा जायन्ते तेन चैवोपरुध्यते ॥

CarSam SūSthā XVII.118

Vāta in its normal state is responsible for all activities of the body. *Vāta* in fact constitutes the very life of living beings. When in morbid state, it causes diseases and death.
(Tr. R.K. Sharma and Bhagwan Das)

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The biological function of *vāta* is performed by its inherent properties, as follows:

तत्र प्रस्पन्दनोद्वहनपूरणविवेकधारणलक्षणो वायुः पञ्चधा प्रविभक्तः शरीरं धारयति ।

SuSam SūSthā XV.3.1

Vāyu by its five fold movements of throbling, carrying upwards, filling up, division and retention, supports the body. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

→ *Vāyu* supports the body in five ways – pulsating movement (circulation), centrifugal movement upwards (expiration – speech etc.) centripetal movement of filling up (inspiration, food intake), separation of nutrients from the food and retention.

Similar physiological functions have also been attributed to *pitta* and *kapha.*

पित्तादेवोष्मणः पक्तिर्नराणामुपजायते ।

CarSam SūSthā XVII.116ab

Pitta helps in the digestion because of heat in man.

प्राकृतस्तु बलं श्लेष्मा विकृतो मल उच्यते ।

CarSam SūSthā XVII.117ab

Kapha in the normal state is responsible for strength, but when abnormal becomes an excretory product.

स्नेहो बन्धः स्थिरत्वं च गौरवं वृषता बलम् ।
क्षमा धृतिरलोभश्च कफकर्माविकारजम् ॥

CarSam SūSthā XVIII.51

Unctuousness, binding, stability, heaviness, potency, strength, forbearance, restraint and absence of greed – these are the normal functions of *kapha.*

Seasonal preponderance of tridoṣa

The *tridoṣa* gets accumulated, aggravated and pacified according to season, time of the day, age and in relation to the intake of food.

चयप्रकोपप्रशमा वायोर्ग्रीष्मादिषु त्रिषु ॥
वर्षादिषु तु पित्तस्य, श्लेष्मणः शिशिरादिषु ।

AṣṭH SūSthā XII.24cd–25ab

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Caya, prakopa and *praśama* of *vāyu* (*vāta*) occurs in the three seasons commencing with *grīṣma* respectively; those of *pitta*, with the three commencing with *varṣā*, and those of *śleṣman* (*kapha*) with the three commencing with *śiśira*. (Tr. K.R.S. Murthy)

Similar variations in the preponderance of *tridoṣa* during the day and night have also been conceived.

तत्र, पूर्वाह्णे वसन्तस्य लिङ्गं, मध्याह्ने ग्रीष्मस्य, अपराह्णे प्रावृषः, प्रदोषे वार्षिकं शारदमर्धरात्रे, प्रत्युषसि हैमन्तमुपलक्षयेत्; एवमहोरात्रमपि ... दोषोपचय प्रकोपोपशमैर्जानीयात् ॥

SuSam SūSthā VI.14

The forenoon presents the features of spring, the noon of summer, the afternoon of early rainy season, the dusk of rainy, the midnight of autumn and the dawn of *hemanta*. Thus during the day – accumulation, aggravation and pacification of the *doṣa*s should be understood. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

More details have been provided by Suśruta regarding the timings and features of accumulation and aggravation of the *doṣa*s.

स शीताभ्रप्रवातेषु घर्मान्ते च विशेषतः ।
प्रत्यूषस्यपराह्णे च जीर्णेऽन्ने च प्रकुप्यति ॥

SuSam SūSthā XXI.20

That (*vāyu*) gets aggravated in the cold season during cloudy days and in the presence of strong winds. It is also aggravated in the rainy season after summer, at dawn and later part of the day and after the digestion has been completed. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

तदुष्णैरुष्णकाले च घनान्ते च विशेषतः ।
मध्याह्ने चार्धरात्रे च जीर्यत्यन्ने च कुप्यति ॥

SuSam SūSthā XXI.22

Pitta gets aggravated by the rise of hot substances and in the hot season specially after the rains, in the noon, midnight and during the process of digestion of food. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

स शीतैः शीतकाले च वसन्ते च विशेषतः ।
पूर्वाह्णे च प्रदोषे च भुक्तमात्रे प्रकुप्यति ॥

SuSam SūSthā XXI.24

Kapha gets aggravated by the rise of cold substance, in the cold

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season specially in spring, forenoon, early evening and just after meals. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

Different stages of imbalance of *doṣa*s could be inferred by specific clinical features, e.g. first stage of accumulation (*sañcaya*) was manifested by *stabdhapūrṇa koṣṭhatā* – fullness of the abdomen for *vāta, pītāvabhāsatā, mandoṣmatā* – yellowish complexion and lowered temperature for *pitta* and *aṅgānāṃ gauravam ālasyaṃ* – heaviness in the limbs and lassitude for *kapha.*

In the stage of aggravation, i.e. *prakopa* (*koṣṭhatoda saṃcaraṇa*), pain in the abdomen and flatulence is caused by *vāyu*, *amlikāpipāsā paridāha* acid eructation, thirst and burning sensation by *pitta* and *annadveṣa hṛdayotkledāśca* – aversion to food and nausea is caused by *kapha.*

In the third stage of aggravation – increase *prasara* when the aggravated *doṣa* spread out *vāyu* causes disturbed intestinal movements and meteorism, *pitta* causes localized or generalized burning sensation, sucking pain and hot smoky eructations and *kapha* causes anorexia, indigestion, lassitude and vomitting.

एवं प्रकुपितानां प्रसरतां वायोर्विमार्गगमनाटोपौ, ओषचोषपरिदाह धूमायनानि पित्तस्य, अरोचकाविपाकाङ्गसादाश्छर्दिश्चेति श्लेष्मणो लिङ्गानि भवन्ति ... ।

SuSam SūSthā XXI.32

The signs and symptoms of the spread of excited *vāta* are antiperistasis and distension with borborygmi, of the spread of excited *pitta* are localized or generalized burning sensation, sucking pain and eructations, and of the spread of excited *śleṣmā* are anorexia, indigestion, lassitude and vomitting. (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

Besides, these generalized nonspecific signs and symptoms of vitiated *doṣa* specific diseases involving various organs or tissues of the body are caused by the local abnormality of *srotas.*

कुपितानां हि दोषाणां शरीरे परिधावताम् ।
यत्र सङ्गः स्ववैगुण्याद्व्याधिस्तत्रोपजायते ॥

SuSam SūSthā XXIV.10

Disease is produced only as and when the excited *doṣa*s circulating in the body get abstructed due to the abnormalities of the *srotas.* (Tr. G.D. Singhal)

The diseases are all caused by the vitiated *doṣa*s, however, there is involvement of other constituents of the body, hence they have been classified as general

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in which a disease entity is identified and it has types according to the preponderance of *doṣas*, whereas there are other diseases specific to the *doṣas*.

तत्र विकाराः सामान्यजा, नानात्मजाश्च । ... नानात्मजां ... व्याख्यास्यामः । तद्यथा - अशीतिर्वातविकाराः, चत्वारिंशत् पित्तविकाराः, विंशतिः श्लेष्मविकाराः ।

CarSam SūSthā XX.10

The disorders are of two types – one having general cause and other having specific cause.

Specific diseases are described. There are eighty diseases due to *vāta*, forty diseases due to *pitta* and twenty diseases due to *śleṣman*.

→ *Vāyu* bearing the *doṣa* with motive force affects the channels and other *doṣas*.

देहे स्रोतांसि रिक्तानि पूरयित्वाऽनिलो बली ॥
करोति विविधान् व्याधीन् सर्वाङ्गैकाङ्गसंश्रितान् ।

CarSam CiSthā XXVIII.18cd–19ab

Aggravated *vāyu* fills up the vacant channels of the body and causes various diseases of the whole body or in any one part.

Further:

वायोर्धातुक्षयात् कोपो मार्गस्यावरणेन च (वा) ।

CarSam CiSthā XXVIII.59ab

Vitiation of *vāyu* takes place either from wasting of *dhātus* or obstruction in the channels.

Similarly for *pitta* diseases caused by its inherent properties have been described.

औष्ण्यं तैक्ष्ण्यं द्रवत्वमनतिस्नेहो वर्णश्च शुक्लारुणवर्जो गन्धश्च विस्रो रसौ च कटुकाम्लौ सरत्वं च पित्तस्यात्मरूपाणि ; ... दाहौष्ण्यपाकस्वेदक्लेदकोथकण्डूस्रावरागा यथास्वं च गन्धवर्णरसाभिनिर्वर्तनं पित्तस्य कर्माणि; तैरन्वितं पित्तविकारम् ... ॥

CarSam SūSthā XX.15

Heat, sharpness, fluidity, slight unctuousness, all colours besides white and reddish, fishy – unpleasant smell, pungent and sour taste

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and (liquid) mobility are the specific characters of *pitta*. ..... Burning, heat, suppuration, sweating, moisture, gangrene, itching, discharge, redness alongwith the appearance of respective smell, colour and taste are the effects of *pitta* and if found indicate *pittaja* disorders.

Diseases caused by the inherent properties of *kapha* are also described.

स्नेहशैत्यशौक्ल्यगौरवमाधुर्यस्थैर्यपैच्छिल्यमात्स्न्यानि श्लेष्मण आत्मरूपाणि । एवंविधत्वाच्च श्लेष्मणः कर्मणः स्वलक्षणमिदमस्य भवति तं तं शरीरावयवमाविशतः । तद्यथा – श्वैत्यशैत्यकण्डूस्थैर्यगौरवस्नेहसुप्तिक्लेदोपदेहबन्धमाधुर्यचिरकारित्वानि श्लेष्मणः कर्माणि । तैरन्वितं श्लेष्मविकारमेव अध्यवस्येत् ।

CarSam SūSthā XX.18

Unctuousness, coldness, whiteness, heaviness, sweetness, stability, sliminess and softness are the specific properties of *kapha*. This sort of *kapha* exhibits the following actions in respective body parts when it enters into them, such as – whiteness, coldness, itching, immobility, heaviness, unctuousness, numbness, moistening, mucous covering, binding, sweetness and chronicity are the actions of *kapha*. The disorders associated with these should be diagnosed as the *kaphaja* one. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Thus the concept of *tridoṣa* although based on the philosophical tradition of Sāṃkhya and Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika as an enquiry of the Ultimate Reality has been adapted in Āyurveda as a practical application to understand the body physiology, causation of the diseases and their management also.

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ADHIBHŪTA-ADHIDAIVA-ADHYĀTMA

Overview

The three terms, viz. *adhibhūta* (n.), *adhidaiva* (n.) and *adhyātma* (n.) – are known today as a triad but they have also been used singly or in pairs, viz. *adhibhūta-adhyātma*, *adhibhūta-adhidaiva*, *adhidaiva-adhyātma*, their order being insignificant. Basically, the three stand for the outer or tangible (*adhibhūta*), the intangible described as divine (*adhidaiva*) and the one pertaining to the 'self' identified with the body, mind, *ātman*, etc. (*adhyātma*). This triad has very deep roots in Indian thought reflected in Vedic and later literature, both in postulation and interpretation. Whether or not, these three words occurred in early Vedic literature is immaterial because the vision and understanding of the unity between the 'outer' and the 'inner' has always been there. Just one example will suffice here – the Moon is said to be born of the mind and the mind in turn to be born of the Moon. This triad has fostered the basic unity of the phenomenal, the eternal and self-experiential aspects of Reality, so much so that it is impossible to separate one from the other.

Etymology and Related Words

The word *adhibhūta* is derived from the root *bhū-* 'to become' with the suffix *kta*. With the prefix *adhi, bhūta* becomes neuter indeclinable compound *adhibhūtam*. The word *deva* is derived from the root *div-* 'to shine, be bright' with the suffix *ac*; *deva* becomes *daiva* when the suffix *aṇ* is added to *deva* with the prefix *adhi*, the word *daiva* becomes *adhidaivam*, a neuter indeclinable compound. The etymology of the word *ātman* is uncertain. It is variously derived from the roots *an-* 'to breath' (cf. *prāṇa*), *at-* 'to move', or *vā-* 'to blow'. With *adhi*, it forms a neuter indeclinable compound *adhyātmam*.

The indeclinable prefix *adhi* is derived from the root *dhā-* 'to put, to place' with the negative particle *na*.

Adhidaiva, *adhidevata*, and *adhidaivata* are cognate words. All the three terms mean 'with reference to, or belonging to, a deity'. Sometimes one comes across a word *devatrā* in the Vedic literature (ṚV V.61.7) which has a similar meaning. The words *adhibhūta* and *adhyātma* have no cognates.

Adhiyajña occurring in the **Bhagavad-Gītā** (VIII.3–4)deserves mention here because it occurs there along with *adhibhūta*, *adhyātma* and *adhidaiva*.

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Adhiyajña is explained there as *puruṣottama* who is the enjoyer of all *yajñas*, whereas *adhibhūta* has been explained as of perishable nature because it relates to contingent beings and *adhidaivata* has been identified with *puruṣa* or *ātman* because all the *devatās* reside in it. *Adhyātma* has been identified here with *svabhāva* which is explained by Abhinavagupta in his commentary as *caitanyabhāva* that is never dissociated from self.

The concept of three-fold human sufferings or afflictions, viz. *ādhyātmika, ādhibhautika* and *ādhidaivika* (*duḥkhas*) is first mentioned in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** as *duḥkhatraya* and has been explained by Vācaspatimiśra in the **Sāṃkhyatattva-Kaumudī** as:

'दुःखत्रयाभिघाताज्जिज्ञासा' ... ।

दुःखानां त्रयं दुःखत्रयम् । तत् खलु आध्यात्मिकम्, आधिभौतिकम् आधिदैविकञ्चेति ... ।

TaKau on SāṃKā I

'From the infliction of threefold pain (*adhibhūta, adhidaiva* and *adhyātma*) the query arises (how to find out a means of its removal)'.

Duḥkhatraya means (the combination of) threefold pain, i.e. *ādhyātmika* (spiritual), *ādhidaivika* (supernatural) and *ādhibhautika* (physical). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

The *ādhidaivika* sufferings are caused by storms, rains, fire, flood, etc. The *ādhibhautika* sufferings are caused by wild animals, reptiles, insects, evil men like thieves, bandits and dacoits. *Ādhyātmika* sufferings relate to the ailments afflicting the body and mind.

This concept became very popular in later Bhakti literature.

Layers of Meaning

Bhūta means any being, sentient, insentient, or divine; creatures in general (*kṣaraḥ sarvāṇi bhūtāni*, BhG XV.16); a spirit, ghost, an imp, a devil (*tato rakṣāṃ mahātejaḥ kuru bhūtavināśinīm*, Rām VII.66.3). The **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** says:

एषा घोरतमा वेला घोराणां घोरदर्शना ।
चरन्ति यस्यां भूतानि भूतेशानुचराणि ह ॥

BhāgPur III.14.22

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This particular time is most inauspicious because at this time the horrible looking ghosts and constant companions of the lord of the ghosts are visible. (Tr. B.S. Prabhupada)

Other meanings of the term refer to 'an actual occurrence', 'a fact' (*bhūtārtha*), 'the past', 'past-time', 'well-being', 'welfare', and a symbolical expression for the number 'five'. As singular, the word *bhūta* means any one of the five elements (*pañcamahābhūtāni – pṛthivī, ap, tejas, vāyu*, and *ākāśa*).

The most popular meaning of *bhūta* is the whole creation, movable or immovable, and empirical beings therein:

रक्षन् धर्मेण भूतानि राजा वध्यांश्च घातयन् ।
यजतेऽहरहर्यज्ञैः सहस्रशतदक्षिणैः ॥

Manu VIII.306

A king who protects the created beings in accordance with the sacred law and smites those worthy of corporal punishment, daily offers (as it were) sacrifices at which hundred thousands (are given as) fees. (Tr. G. Bühler)

Adhibhūta denotes all that belongs to the material or elemental existence. Elemental creation consists of fivefold divisions. The **Taittirīya Āraṇyaka** (VII.7.1) mentions them as follows:

Lokapañcaka (fivefold worlds):

1. *Pṛthivī* (earth)
2. *Antarikṣa* (space)
3. *Dyau* (heaven)
4. *Diśaḥ* (main quarters)
5. *Avāntaradiśaḥ* (intermediate quarters)

Devatāpañcaka (fivefold divinities):

1. *Agni* (Fire)
2. *Vāyu* (Wind)
3. *Āditya* (Sun)
4. *Candramas* (Moon)
5. *Nakṣatrāṇi* (Stars)

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Dravyapañcaka (fivefold substances):

1. *Āpaḥ* (waters)
2. *Oṣadhayaḥ* (herbs, plants)
3. *Vanaspatayaḥ* (trees)
4. *Ākāśa* (space, ether)
5. *Ātman* (self, body)

By the word *ātman* in the list is meant the Virāṭa-Puruṣa who is regarded as an aggregate (*samaṣṭirūpa*) of all elemental bodies. He is the world-body.

Adhidaiva (or *adhidevata* or *adhidaivata*) means all that belongs to the deities. It also means the divine creation. The **Bhagavad-Gītā** employs the term *adhidaiva* in this sense:

किं तद्ब्रह्म किमध्यात्मं किं कर्म पुरुषोत्तम ।
अधिभूतं च किं प्रोक्तमधिदैवं किमुच्यते ॥

BhG VIII.1

What is that Brahman? What about the Individual Self (*adhyātma*)? What is action (*karma*), O Purushottama? And what is declared to be the physical region (*adhibhūta*)? And what is the divine region (*adhidaiva*) said to be? (Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

The word *adhidaivata* has also been used in the same sense:

अधिभूतं क्षरो भावः पुरुषश्चाधिदैवतम् ।
अधियज्ञोऽहमेवात्र देहे देहभृतां वर ॥

BhG VIII.4

The physical region (*adhibhūta*) is the perishable existence, and Puruṣa or the Soul is the divine region (*adhidaivata*). The *adhiyajña* (entity concerned with Sacrifice) is Myself, here in the body, O best of the embodied. (Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

Adhidaiva also develops a system of correspondence between the eleven organs of the senses and the deities. They are:

	Organ	**Deity**
1.	*Śrotrau* (ears)	Dik (Direction)
2.	*Tvak* (skin)	Vāta (Wind)
3.	*Netrau* (eyes)	Arka (Sun)
4.	*Rasanā* (tongue)	Varuṇa
5.	*Ghrāṇa* (nose)	Aśvins

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6.	*Vāk* (speech)	Vahni (Fire)
7.	*Hastau* (hands)	Indra
8.	*Pādau* (feet)	Upendra
9.	*Pāyu* (anus)	Mitra
10.	*Upastha* (organ of generation)	Prajāpati
11.	*Manas* (mind)	Candramas

Finally, the word *adhidaiva* refers to the Supreme Deity, the Primordial Man, the cause of the material creation (*puruṣaścādhidaivatam*, BhG VIII.4).

The most common meaning of the term *adhyātma* is 'belonging to self, or 'one's corporeal body', 'concerning an individual'. The term *ātman* is of crucial significance in Indian thought. Basically it denotes the essence of anything that is all-pervading. At the secondary level *ātman* (self) is also identified with body, mind, intellect, vital force and so on. As such there are the concepts – Supreme Self, individual self. **Kalātattvakośa** (Vol. I) elucidated the many dimensions of the concept. In the context of *adhyātma* perhaps it is necessary to remind ourselves that already in the **Ṛgveda** and the **Atharvaveda**, the word *ātman* is used in a variety of senses. It conveys the following meanings:

1. Self

अदब्ध इन्दो पवसे मदिन्तम आत्मेन्द्रस्य भवसि धासिरुत्तमः ।
अभि स्वरन्ति बहवो मनीषिणो राजानमस्य भुवनस्य निंसते ॥

ṚV IX.85.3

Unharmed, best Cheerer, thou, O Indu, flowest on; thou, even thou thyself, art Indra's noblest food.
Full many a wise man lifts to thee the song of praise, and hails thee with a kiss as Sovran of this world. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

2. Breath (*prāṇa*)

In this sense, it has been mostly used in combination with *Vāyu* or *Vāta*.

सूर्यं चक्षुर्गच्छतु वातमात्मा द्यां च गच्छ पृथिवीं च धर्मणा ।
अपो वा गच्छ यदि तत्र ते हितमोषधीषु प्रति तिष्ठा शरीरैः ॥

ṚV X.16.3

(Sāyaṇa: *ātmā prāṇaḥ*)
The Sun receive thine eye, the Wind thy spirit; go, as thy merit is, to earth or heaven.

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Go, if it be thy lot, unto the waters; go, make thine home in plants with all thy members. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

सूर्यं चक्षुषा गच्छ वातमात्मना दिवं च गच्छ पृथिवीं च धर्मभिः ।

AV XVIII.2.7ab

Go thou to the Sun with thine eyes, to the wind with thy soul (*prāṇa*); go to the heaven and to earth with (their) due shares ... (Tr. W.D. Whitney)

3. Life

The word *ātman* has been often used in the sense of life or living force. For example:

आत्मा पितुस्तनूर्वास ओजोदा अभ्यञ्जनम् ।
तुरीयमिद् रोहितस्य पाकस्थामानं भोजं दातारमब्रवम् ॥

ṚV VIII.3.24

Raiment is body, food is life,
and healing ointment giveth strength,
As the free-handed giver of the
ruddy steed, I have named
Pākasthāman fourth. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

4. Body

पृथक् सर्वे प्राजापत्याः प्राणा़नात्मसु बिभ्रति ।
तान्त्सर्वान् ब्रह्म रक्षति ब्रह्मचारिण्याभृतम् ॥

AV XI.5.22

Individually do all that are
of Prajāpati bear breaths in
their bodies (*ātman*); all these
the *brahman* defends, brought
in the Vedic student. (Tr. W.D. Whitney)

5. Inner Consciousness (*cetanā*)

को ददर्श प्रथमं जायमानमस्थन्वन्तं यदनस्था बिभर्ति ।
भूम्या असुरसृगात्मा क्व स्वित् को विद्वांसमुप गात् प्रष्टुमेतत् ॥

ṚV I.164.4

Who hath beheld him as he sprang to being, seen how the boneless

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One supports the bony ?
Where is the blood of earth, the life, the spirit? Who may approach the man who knows, to ask it? (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

6. Soul

चित्रं देवानामुदगादनीकं चक्षुर्मित्रस्य वरुणस्याग्नेः ।
आप्रा द्यावापृथिवी अन्तरिक्षं सूर्य आत्मा जगतस्तस्थुषश्च ॥

ṚV I.115.1

The brilliant presence of the Gods hath risen, the eye of Mitra, Varuṇa and Agni.
The soul of all that moveth not or moveth, the Sun hath filled the air and earth and heaven. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

7. Primeval Soul

आत्मा यज्ञस्य रंह्या सुष्वाणः पवते सुतः ।
प्रत्नं नि पाति काव्यम् ॥

ṚV IX.6.8

Soul of the sacrifice, the juice effused flows quickly on: he keeps
His ancient wisdom of a Sage. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

तस्मिन् हिरण्यये कोशे त्र्यरे त्रिप्रतिष्ठिते ।
तस्मिन् यद् यक्षमात्मन्वत् तद् वै ब्रह्मविदो विदुः ॥

AV X.2.32

In that golden vessel, three-spoked, having three supports – what soul-possessing monster (*yakṣa*) there is in it, that verily the knowers of the *brahman* know. (Tr. W.D. Whitney)

The word *adhyātma* carries with it most of the meanings enumerated above. As early as in the **Taittirīya Saṃhitā** (II.5.3.3) the word *adhyātma* denotes the subtle unity of subjective and objective entities. When Indra killed Vṛtra, his power disappeared and hid into the earth. Plants and roots grew therefrom. Indra went to Prajāpati and entreated him to restore his power and strength. Prajāpati asked cattle to collect his (Indra's) power and strength. The cattle collected it from the plants in themselves (*adhyātma*) in the form of fresh milk (*pratidhuk*).

Describing the inner Agnihotra, the **Śāṅkhāyana Āraṇyaka** (X.1) refers to the self (*ādhyātmika*) of an individual wherein have been established different divinities in different parts of a man:

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Agni	is established in	*vāk*
Vāyu	is established in	*prāṇa*
Āditya	is established in	*cakṣus*
Candramas	is established in	*manas*
Diś	is established in	*śrotra*
Ap	is established in	*retas*

From individual self, the meaning of *adhyātma* develops into the universal self. As such, the word has been equated with Brahman. It then functions as a bridge between the Supreme Soul (*paramātman*) and individual soul (*bhūtātman*).

Development of the Concept

Adhibhūta

Adhibhūta denotes the phenomenal world. It refers to the substratum of material or gross objects. The word *adhibhūta* is absent in the early Vedic literature, but the basic idea of viewing the relationship between the phenomenal world and the human body and mind is certainly present in the **Ṛgveda**:

चन्द्रमा मनसो जातश्चक्षोः सूर्यो अजायत ।
मुखादिन्द्रश्चाग्निश्च प्राणाद् वायुरजायत ॥

ṚV X.90.13

The Moon was generated from his mind, and from his eye the Sun had birth;

Indra and Agni from his mouth were born, and Vāyu from his breath. (Based on the tr. by R.T.H. Griffith)

i.e., the Moon is born of the mind and the Sun is born of the eye. This is clear indication of the relationship between *adhibhūta* and *adhyātma* without the mention of these words. Although the word *bhūta* is found in the **Ṛgveda**, it has been uniformly used in the sense of past in apposition to *bhavya* (future).

In the Brahmanic texts, the word is found but only occasionally. Thus, for instance, in the **Śāṅkhāyana Brāhmaṇa** (XX.4.13–14) *āyu* is regarded as *prāṇa* in the beings (*adhibhūta*). The word is most commonly used in regard to the visible (physical) creation. Dealing with the *bhautika-sarga*, the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** says:

अष्टविकल्पो दैवस्तैर्यग्योनश्च पञ्चधा भवति ।
मानुषश्चैकविधः समासतो भौतिकः सर्गः ॥

SāṃKā 53

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The divine class has eight varieties;
the animal, five. Mankind is single
in its class. This is in summary,
the world (*sarga*, emanation) of living
things. (Tr. John Davies)

The entire elemental creation (*bhautika-sarga*) is regarded as of three types, namely, 1. Divine (*daiva*), 2. Animal (*tairyak*), and 3. Human (*mānuṣa*). The Divine creation is of eight kinds:

1. *Brāhma* – dwellers in the *Brahmaloka*
2. *Prājāpatya* – dwellers in the *Prajāpatiloka*
3. *Aindra* – dwellers in the *Svargaloka*
4. *Paitra* – dwellers in the *Pitṛloka*
5. *Gāndharva* – dwellers in the *Gandharvaloka*
6. *Yakṣa* – dwellers in the *Yakṣaloka*
7. *Rākṣasa* – dwellers in the *Rākṣasaloka*
8. *Paiśāca* – dwellers in the *Piśācaloka*

The animal world is of five varieties:

1. *Paśu* – domestic animals, cow, donkey, etc.
2. *Mṛga* – wild animals, lion, tiger, deer, etc.
3. *Pakṣī* – winged animals, birds, swan, vulture, etc.; insects, mosquitoes, etc.
4. *Sarīsṛpa* – creeping animals, snakes, worms, etc.
5. *Sthāvara* – immovable creatures, trees, plants, etc.

The human creation consists of only one type, i.e. all human beings.

Sometimes the physical creation is regarded as comprising four types:

1. *Jarāyuja* – born from the womb, viviparous beings
2. *Aṇḍaja* – born from an egg, oviparous beings, birds, etc.
3. *Ūṣmaja* or *Svedaja* – generated by warm vapour or sweat, insects, etc.
4. *Udbhijja* – plant kingdom.

Anything or everything related to the above fourteen or four types of creation is termed *adhibhūta.*

We have already seen that the **Taittirīya Āraṇyaka** (VIII.7.1) divides the entire universe into three pentads, viz. *Lokapañcaka*, *Devatāpañcaka*, and *Dravyapañcaka.* Besides these different substances of material world, the word

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'*bhūta*' connotes also ten elements (*bhūtamātrā*) of material being:

1. *vāk* (speech)
2. *gandha* (smell)
3. *rūpa* (form)
4. *śabda* (sound)
5. *annarasa* (food juice)
6. *karma* (deed)
7. *sukha-duḥkha* (pleasure and pain)
8. *ānanda* (pleasure)
9. *rati* (joy of love)
10. *prajāti* (power of reproduction)

The **Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad** (III.8) further says that the ten elements of material existence are dependent on ten elements of intelligence, viz.:

1. *Vaktā* – one who speaks
2. *Ghrātā* – one who smells
3. *Draṣṭā* – one who sees
4. *Śrotā* – one who hears
5. *Annarasasya-vijñātā* – one who tastes the food juice
6. *Kartā* – one who performs the deed
7. *Sukha-duḥkhayor-vijñātā* – one who feels pleasure and pain

8-10. *Ānandasya, rateḥ, prajāteḥ-vijñātā* – one who experiences pleasure, joy of love and reproduction.

एता दशैव भूतमात्रा अधिप्रज्ञम् । दश प्रज्ञामात्रा अधिभूतम् । यद्धि भूतमात्रा न स्युर्न प्रज्ञामात्राः स्युः यद्वा प्रज्ञामात्रा न स्युर्न भूतमात्राः स्युः । न ह्यन्यतरतो रूपं किंचन सिध्येत् । नो एतन्नाना ॥ तद्यथा रथस्यारेषु नेमिरर्पितः । नाभावरा अर्पिताः । एवमेवैता भूतमात्राः प्रज्ञामात्रास्वर्पिताः । प्रज्ञामात्राः प्राणे अर्पिताः । स एष प्राण एव प्रज्ञात्माऽऽनन्दोऽजरोऽमृतः ।

KausUp III.8

These ten existential elements (*bhūtamātrā*) are with reference to intelligence (*adhiprajñam*). The ten intelligence elements (*prajñāmātrā*) are with reference to existence (*adhibhūtam*). For, truly, if there were no elements of existence, there would be no elements of intelligence. Verily, if there were no elements of intelligence, there would be no elements of existence. For from either alone no form whatsoever would be possible. And this (the self of intelligence) is not many. For as in a chariot the felly is fixed on the spokes and the spokes are fixed on the hub, even so these elements of existence

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are fixed on the elements of intelligence and the elements of intelligence are fixed in the breathing spirit (*prāṇa*). This same breathing spirit is, truly, the intelligence self, bliss, ageless, immortal.
(Tr. S. Radhakrishnan)

The **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** (II.4.1–2) postulates as to how the material beings came into existence. The Supreme Self (*Ātman*) first created the four worlds, viz. *ambhas* (water), *marīci* (light rays), *mara* (death), *āpaḥ* (waters). This water (*ambhas*) is above the heaven. The heaven is its support. The light rays are the atmosphere (*antarikṣa*). Death is earth. What are beneath (*adhastāt*), they are the waters (*āpaḥ*). From the waters, He (the Self) brought forth a Puruṣa and formed it into a shape. The Self brooded over the Puruṣa; then He hatched him. His (the Puruṣa's) mouth split like an egg. Then eight objects came forth as follows:

Out of the mouth sprang forth speech, out of speech, Agni;

out of the nose sprang forth Prāṇa, out of Prāṇa, Vāyu;

out of the eyes sprang forth the sight, out of the sight, Āditya;

out of the ears sprang forth the sense of hearing, the ears, out of ears, the Diśas;

out of the skin sprang forth the hair, out of the hair, plants and trees;

out of the heart sprang forth the Manas, out of the Manas, the Moon;

out of the navel sprang forth the Apāna, from the Apāna, Death;

out of the generative organ sprang forth the semen, out of semen, the waters.

These are the eight primordial guardians of the world brought forth from the Cosmic Puruṣa grown from the waters.

The Āraṇyaka further says that the Supreme Self (*Ātman*) produced a man (*puruṣa*) as an abode for these world-guardians. These deities (god-heads, the world guardians) entered into the man in the reverse order:

अग्निर्वाग् भूत्वा मुखं प्राविशद्, वायुः प्राणो भूत्वा नासिके प्राविशद्, आदित्यश्चक्षुर्भूत्वाऽक्षिणी प्राविशद्, दिशः श्रोत्रं भूत्वा कर्णौ प्राविशन्नोषधिवनस्पतयो लोमानि भूत्वा त्वचं प्राविशंश्चन्द्रमाः मनो भूत्वा

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हृदयं प्राविशन्, मृत्युरपानो भूत्वा नाभिं प्राविशद्, आपो रेतो भूत्वा शिश्नं प्राविशन् ... ।

AitĀr II.4.2

Agni becoming *vāk* (speech) entered into the mouth, Vāyu becoming *prāṇa* (breath) entered into the two nostrils, Āditya (the Sun) becoming sight entered into the two eyes, Diśaḥ (directions) becoming hearing entered into the two ears, Oṣadhis and Vanaspatis (plants and trees) becoming hair entered into the skin, Candramā becoming *maṇas* (mind) entered into the heart, Mṛtyu becoming *apāna* (intermediate breath) entered into the navel, and the waters becoming *retas* (semen) entered into the generative organ.

(Also cf. AitUp I.1.1–3.)

This thus forms the individual man. There is correlation between the Cosmic Puruṣa and the individual man (*puruṣa*). The Supreme Creator (*Ātman*), cogitated: "How can this man endure without me?" He entered in this man by splitting the part of the skull (*sīman*) on which the hair is parted and entered through this aperture which is called *vidṛti* (seam or suture) of the head. Thus the Supreme Self entered into the man as individual self and perceived the created beings (*bhūtāni*). This forms the material or physical world (*adhibhūta*). *Adhibhūta* is subject to perish, only the Self is the absolute, self-existent, imperishable.

परस्तस्मात्तु भावोऽन्योऽव्यक्तोऽव्यक्तात्सनातनः ।
यः स सर्वेषु भूतेषु नश्यत्सु न विनश्यति ॥

BhG VIII.20

But that other external Unmanifested Being, distinct from this Unmanifested (*Avyakta*), – He does not perish when all creatures perish. (Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

At the end of a *kalpa* all manifested beings merge into the Supreme Lord.

सर्वभूतानि कौन्तेय प्रकृतिं यान्ति मामिकाम् ।
कल्पक्षये पुनस्तानि कल्पादौ विसृजाम्यहम् ॥

BhG IX.7

All beings, O son of Kunti, go into My *Prakṛti* at the end of a *kalpa*.
I send them forth again at the beginning of (the next) *kalpa*.
(Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

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Adhidaiva

All that which belongs to the deities and divine powers is *adhidevata.* In the Vedic literature, particularly in the Brāhmaṇas, the term *adhidevata* (or *adhidaivata*) is found, though the sense is the same as that of *adhidaiva.* It has been mostly used in the liturgical parlance, and as such, it is often used in the juxtaposition of the terms *adhiyajña* and *adhyātma.* Its independent occurrence is very rare.

Dealing with the deities (*adhidaivata*) of the *Dvādaśāha yāga* (a ritual continuing for twelve days), the **Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa** (Gavāmayanaśeṣaḥ) (II.429) mentions that this world represents the *Prāyaṇīya* ritual of the *Atirātra* ritual (the major ritual); whatever is white that is the form of the day; whatever is black that is the night; whatever variegated, that is of the constellations (*nakṣatrāṇām*); *Saṃvatsara* (period of the ritual) is the *svargaloka*; *Ārambhaṇīya* (ritual) is the day; Brahman is the *Abhiplava* (*sāman*); Kṣatra is the *Pṛṣṭhya* (*stotra*); Agni represents the Abhijit *devatā*; *Svarasāmans* (*stotras*) represent the *Viśvedevāḥ* (a group of deities); the *Viṣuvān* (the central day) of the *Gavāmayana* ritual represents Āditya; Indra is represented by *Viśvajit yāga*; day and night are represented by *Go*, and *Āyuṣī* (rituals); the worlds (*lokāḥ*) are the days of the *Dvādaśāha*, the *Mahāvrata* day in a *Somayāga* represents Prajāpati; the worlds above are represented by *Udayanīya* (ritual) of *Atirātra.* What we see is the form of the day and night and the stars we see are the forms of *nakṣatras.*

The **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (XI.1.6.1–28) expounds the deities of the New and Full-moon sacrifices. Narrating as to how these divinities came into being, it says:

In the beginning, this universe was a sea of water. The waters performed fervid devotions in order to reproduce. When they were becoming heated, a golden egg was born. In a year's time a man, Prajāpati was produced therefrom. He broke open this golden egg. There was then no resting place. At the end of a year, he tried to speak. He said '*bhūḥ*', this word became the earth; he said '*bhuvaḥ*', this became this air (*antarikṣa*); he uttered '*svaḥ*', this became the yonder sky. These three words consist of five syllables: he made them to be the five seasons. Desirous of offspring, he went on singing praises and toiling. He laid the power of reproduction into his own self. By (the breath of) his mouth he created the gods; the gods were created on entering the sky and thus is the godhead of the gods (*deva*) that they were created on entering the sky (*div*). Having created them, there was, as it were, daylight for him. And by the downward breathing, he created the Asuras: they were created on entering

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this earth. Having created them there was, as it were, darkness for him. Now what daylight there was for him on creating the gods, of that he made the day, and what darkness, as it were, there was for him; on creating the Asuras, of that he made the night. Prajāpati thought: 'Everything (*sarvam*) I have obtained by stealth (*tsar*) who have created these deities'; this became the '*sarvatsara*', '*sarvatsara*' is the same as *saṃvatsara* (year). Prajāpati bethought himself, 'I have created here a counterpart of myself, the year'; whence people say, 'Prajāpati is the year'.

Now, these are the deities who were created out of Prajāpati, Agni, Indra, Soma, and Parameṣṭhin Prājāpatya. They went on singing praises and toiling. The Parameṣṭhin saw the New and Full-moon offereings, and performed these offerings. He desired to become everything here. He became the waters. He performed it for his father Prajāpati. Prajāpati desired to become everything here. He became the breath (vital air: *prāṇa*), for breath is everything here. Prajāpati is that breath which blows here (the wind: *vāyu*). Prajāpati performed it for his son Indra. Indra desired to become everything here. He became speech (*vāk*), for speech is everything here. Indra performed it for his brothers, Agni and Soma. Having sacrificed, these two desired to become everything here. Agni became the eater of food and Soma, food; the eater of food, and food are everything here. These five deities (viz. Prajāpati, Agni, Indra, Soma, and Parameṣṭhin Prājāpatya) performed that wishfulfilling sacrifice (*Kāmapra*).

When they had sacrificed, they beheld (discovered) the eastern quarter, and the sky above. Then they beheld the southern quarter, and made it to be space, it became this air. Then they beheld the western quarter, and made it to be prosperity (*śrī*). 'May we see this prosperity!' they said and it became this earth, for this (earth) is indeed (the source of) prosperity. Then they saw the northern quarter, and made it the waters, they made the waters (to represent) the law (*dharma*), for the waters are the law.

These are eleven deities (viz. the four quarters and the objects enumerated as represented by them) – there are five fore-offerings (*prayājāḥ*), two butter-portions (*ājyabhāgau*), the *Sviṣṭakṛt*, and three after-offerings (*anuyājāḥ*). These are eleven offerings (in the New and Full-moon sacrifices), – it was by these offerings that the gods gained these worlds and these quarters. (Summary based on the tr. by J. Eggeling)

The above account of the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** adumbrates the part played by the deities in Vedic sacrifice. In the above narration, there is a close correspondence between the eleven deities and the eleven offerings of the New and Full-moon sacrifices. This is *adhidevata.*

The manifestation of the divinities in a minute form into the individual

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body is known as *adhidaivata.* At the time of dissolution of the material world, these divinities return to the *Devaloka.*

The word '*adhidevatāḥ*' has been employed in exoteric sense also. It then means the presiding deities over different parts of human body. The **Bṛahad-Jābālopaniṣad** (IV) mentions the deities of different parts of the body where *tripuṇḍra* (three sacred marks) are to be put. These divinities are enumerated as thirty-two, sixteen, eight, or five. If thirty-two they are:

aṣṭamūrti – Śikhaṇḍi, Śrīkaṇṭha, etc.
aṣṭavidyā – Satya, Īśa, etc.
aṣṭadikpāla – Indra, Vahṇi, Yama, Naiṛṛta, Varuṇa, Vāyu, Kubera and Īśa
aṣṭavasu – Dhara, Dhruva, Soma, Āpaḥ, Anila, Anala, Pratyūṣa and Prabhāsa.

If sixteen, they are :
Śivaśakti, Sadākhya, Īśa, Vidyākhya, Vāmā, etc.; nine Śaktis, Nāsatya, Dasraka, (Aśvinau).

If eight, they are:
Brahmā and seven Ṛṣis (Marīci, Atri, Aṅgiras, Pulastya, Pulaha, Kratu, and Vasiṣṭha).

The term *adhidevata* has also been used in the sense of the knowledge which pertains to the deities (*devatāḥ adhikṛtya pravṛttaṃ śāstram*).

Adhyātma

With reference to, belonging to, or with regard to the *ātman* is *adhyātma.* The word *ātman* as used in the Vedas in the sense of self, breath, life, body, inner consciousness, soul, and primeval soul has already been noted above. The term *adhyātma* has also developed as carrying all these meanings.

1. Self

The term *adhyātma* has been applied for one's own self. The **Gopatha Brāhmaṇa** (II.1.22) says, 'the word *ka* is the name of happiness; thus he confers happiness upon himself (*adhyātma*). Explaining the mystic significance of the joining (*saṃhitāyā upaniṣad*) of the letters and that in respect of five points concerning the world-space (*adhiloka*), the world-lighters (*adhijyautiṣa*), the knowledge (*adhividya*), the begetting (*adhipraja*) and one's own self, in connection with one's own self (*adhyātma*), the **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** says:

अथाध्यात्मम्:
अधरा हनुः पूर्वरूपम्, उत्तरा हनुरुत्तररूपम् ।
वाक् सन्धिः, जिह्वा सन्धानम् इति ॥

TUp I.3–4

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Now with regard to one's own self. The foregoing letter is the lower jaw, the letter coming after is the upper jaw, the connecting link is speech; the tongue is bond. Thus with regard to one's own self. (Tr. V.M. Bedekar and G.B. Palsule)

The **Nirukta** (VII.1) divides Vedic *mantra*s in three categories, namely, 1. *parokṣakṛta* (indirectly addressed), 2. *pratyakṣakṛta* (directly addressed), and 3. *ādhyātmika* (self-invocation).

The **Nirukta** (VII.2) explains self-invocatory *mantra*s as compositions in the first person. Yāska cites, as for example, *Indra Vaikuṇṭha-sūkta* (ṚV X.48–49), *Lava-sūkta* (ṚV X.119) and *Vāgāmbhṛṇī-sūkta* (ṚV X.125).

By far the most prominent use of *ātman*, in the sense of self, is found in the **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad**:

स (याज्ञवल्क्य) होवाच – न वा अरे पत्युः कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति । आत्मनस्तु कामाय पतिः प्रियो भवति; न वा अरे जायायै कामाय जाया प्रिया भवति, आत्मनस्तु कामाय जाया प्रिया भवति । न वा अरे पुत्राणां कामाय पुत्राः प्रिया भवन्ति, आत्मनस्तु कामाय पुत्राः प्रिया भवन्ति । न वा अरे वित्तस्य कामाय वित्तं प्रियं भवति आत्मनस्तु कामाय वित्तं प्रियं भवति ... ।

BṛUp II.4.5

Then he (Yājñavalkya) said: Verily, not for the sake of the husband is the husband dear but a husband is dear for the sake of the self. Verily, not for the sake of the wife is the wife dear but a wife is dear for the sake of the self. Verily, not for the sake of the sons are the sons dear but the sons are dear for the sake of the self. Verily, not for the sake of wealth is wealth dear but wealth is dear for the sake of the self. ... (Tr. S. Radhakrishnan)

2. Body

The term *adhyātma* has been employed also in the sense of a corporeal body in general. In connection with the *Iṣṭaka-paśu* rite (animal sacrifice performed with regard to bricks), the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** uses the term *adhyātmam aṅgāni* (limbs of the body). It says:

ता विषमा विषमपदा विषमाक्षराः । विषमाणि हि छन्दांसि । अथो यान्यस्याध्यात्ममङ्गानिविषमाणि तान्यस्यैताभिराप्रीणाति ।

ŚBr VI.2.1.34

They (*sāmidhenī* verses) are unequal. They consist of unequal feet,

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and unequal syllables, for the metres are unequal; whatever unequal limbs there are at his (Agni's body: *adhyātmam*), those limbs of his he propitiates by those verses. (Tr. J. Eggeling)

Further, the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (X.5.2.17) also employs the term *adhyātma* in the sense of body. "Is Death near or far away. Let him say, 'both near and far away'; for in as much as he is here on earth in the body (*adhyātma*), he is near and in as much as he is that one in yonder world, he also is far away."

3. One's own body

The meaning 'body' of the term *adhyātma* in general sense shifts to 'one's own body'. The **Aitareya Brāhmaṇa** employs the term in this sense:

उत्तमेन पर्यायेण स्तुवते, उत्तमान्येव पदानि पुनराददते; यदेवैषां वासो हिरण्यं मणिरध्यात्ममासीत्, तदेवैषां तेनाददते ॥

AitBr IV.6

At the last (*Pra-üga*), they (the priests) repeat twice when chanting the last *pādas* (of the verse). While doing so, they take from them (the *Asuras*) all things they wear on their own body (*adhyātma*) such as dresses, gold and jewels. (Tr. M. Haug)

4. Individual self

A further development of the meaning of the term *adhyātma* is the self, or the spirit residing in the individual body of organic beings (plants, animals, humans, gods, etc.). It may however be noted that this meaning has developed only in the Upanisadic and post-Upanisadic literature. In this connection the **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** (V.14.1–4) may be quoted that gives the exterior form and the inner essence (spirit) of the Gāyatrī. Gāyatrī consists of three *pādas* (feet) of eight syllables each. Eight syllables of the first *pāda* represent:

भूमिरन्तरिक्षं द्यौः ... ।

BṛUp V.14.1

Bhū-mir (earth), *an-ta-ri-kṣa* (interspace), *dy-aur* (sky)....
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

Eight syllables of the second *pāda* represent:

ऋचः यजूँषि सामानि ... ।

BṛUp V.14.2

Ṛ-cas (verses), *ya-jūṃ-ṣi* (sacrificial formulas), *sā-mā-ni* (chants)....
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

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Eight syllables of the third *pāda* represent:

प्राण-अपान व्यान ... ।

BṛUp V.14.3

Prā-ṇa (in-breath), *ap-ā-na* (out-breath), *vy-ā-na* (diffused breath).... (Tr. R.E. Hume)

In addition to these external forms, there is the fourth (*turīya*) *pāda* of Gāyatrī, full of splendour, which is shining up above the dust-particles (*paro-rajas*) and which is the Sun. This, the fourth feet of Gāyatrī (i.e. the Sun) is founded on the truth (*satya*); the truth is the eye; the truth is founded on strength (*bala*); the vital breath (*prāṇa*) is the power (*tad vaitat satyam bale pratiṣṭhitam, prāṇo vai balam*). In this way Gāyatrī is founded on that which is the self (*adhyātma*).

Similarly the syllable *aum* (*om*) comprises both the external as well as internal (spiritual, mystic: *ādhyatmika*) forms. The **Gopatha Brāhmaṇa** mentions the origin and form of the *praṇava* (*aum*):

ब्रह्म ह वै ब्रह्माणं पुष्करे ससृजे । स खलु ब्रह्मा सृष्टश्चिन्तामापेदे। केनाहमेकेनाक्षरेण सर्वांश्च कामान्त्सर्वांश्च लोकान्त्सर्वांश्च देवान्त्सर्वांश्च वेदान्त्सर्वांश्च यज्ञान्त्सर्वांश्च शब्दान्त्सर्वांश्च व्युष्टीः सर्वाणि च भूतानि स्थावरजङ्गमान्यनुभवेयमिति । स ब्रह्मचर्यमचरत् । स ओमित्येतत् अक्षरमपश्यद् द्विवर्णं चतुर्मात्रं सर्वव्यापि सर्वविभ्वयातयामब्रह्म ब्राह्मीं व्याहृतिं ब्रह्मदैवतम् । तया सर्वांश्च कामान्त्सर्वांश्च लोकान्त्सर्वांश्च देवान्त्सर्वांश्च वेदान्त्सर्वांश्च यज्ञान्त्सर्वांश्च शब्दान्त्सर्वांश्च व्युष्टीः सर्वाणि च भूतानि स्थावरजङ्गमान्यन्वभवत् । तस्य प्रथमेन वर्णेनापः स्नेहं चान्वभवत् । तस्य द्वितीयेन वर्णेन तेजो ज्योतींष्यन्वभवत् ।

तस्य प्रथमया स्वरमात्रया पृथिवीमग्निमोषधिवनस्पतीन् ऋग्वेदं भूरिति व्याहृतिं गायत्रं छन्दस्त्रिवृतं स्तोमं प्राचीं दिशं वसन्तम् ऋतुं वाचमध्यात्मं जिह्वां रसमितीन्द्रियाण्यन्वभवत् ।

तस्य द्वितीयया स्वरमात्रयान्तरिक्षं वायुं यजुर्वेदं भुव इति व्याहृतिं त्रैष्टुभं छन्दः पञ्चदशं स्तोमं प्रतीचीं दिशं ग्रीष्मम् ऋतुं प्राणमध्यात्मं नासिके गन्धघ्राणमितीन्द्रियाण्यन्वभवत् ।

तस्य तृतीयया स्वरमात्रया दिवमादित्यं सामवेदं स्वरिति व्याहृतिं जागतं छन्दः सप्तदशं स्तोममुदीचीं दिशं वर्षा ऋतुं ज्योतिरध्यात्मं चक्षुषी दर्शनमितीन्द्रियाण्यन्वभवत् ।

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तस्य वकारमात्रयापश्चन्द्रमसमथर्ववेदं नक्षत्राण्योमिति स्वमात्मानं जनदित्यङ्गिरसामानुष्टुभं छन्द एकविंशं स्तोमं दक्षिणां दिशं शरदम् ऋतुं मनोऽध्यात्मं ज्ञानं ज्ञेयमितीन्द्रियाण्यन्वभवत् ।

तस्य मकारश्रुत्येतिहासपुराणं वाकोवाक्यं गाथा नाराशंसी-रुपनिषदोऽनुशासनानीति वृधत् करद् रुहन् महत् तच्छमोमिति व्याहृतीः स्वरशम्यनानातन्त्रीः स्वरनृत्यगीतवादित्राण्यन्वभवत्, चैत्ररथं दैवतं वैद्युतं ज्योतिर्बार्हतं छन्दस्त्रिणवत्रयस्त्रिंशौ स्तोमौ ध्रुवामूर्ध्वां दिशं हेमन्तशिशिरावृतू श्रोत्रमध्यात्मं शब्दश्रवणमितीन्द्रियाण्यन्वभवत् ।
सैषैकाक्षरर्ग् ब्रह्मणस्तपसोऽग्रे प्रादुर्बभूव ब्रह्मवेदस्याथर्वणं शुक्रम् । अत एव मन्त्राः प्रादुर्बभूवुः ॥

GoBr I.1.16–22

The Bráhman created Bráhman in a lotus-flower. The latter deliberated: 'which is the one word by which all desires are obtained ... and everything is known. He practised *Tapas*. He saw that syllable, which consists of two letters and four moras, which is all-encompassing, all-ruling, ever new, the Brahman .....

Through the first letter he perceived the water (*ap*) and the acquisition (*āpti*); through the second the fire and the light.

The first mora, the *a-* sound, is the earth and the fire, the plants and trees, the Ṛgveda, *bhūr*, the Gāyatrī, the ninefold Sāman, the East, the spring, and with reference to the self, the language, the tongue, and the speech.

The second mora, the *u-* sound is the atmosphere, the wind, the Yajurveda, *bhuvar*, the Triṣṭubh, the fifteen-fold Sāman, the West, the summer, and with reference to the self the breath, the nose, and the smell.

The third mora, the *m-* sound, is the heaven and the Sun, the Sāmaveda, *svar*, the Jagatī, the seventeen-fold Sāman, the North, the rainy season, and with reference to the self the light, the eye and the sight.

The fourth mora, the *Anusvāra*, is the water and the moon, the Atharvaveda, *janas*, the Anuṣṭubh, the twenty-onefold Sāman, the South, the autumn, and with reference to the self the heart, the knowledge and the known.

The reverberation is the Vedāṅgas, creation and dissolution, the Veda-discourses, the great formulas, the Upaniṣads, the Vedic injunctions, the seven Vyāhṛtis, the seven tones, the art, dance, speech

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and music, and the songs of Citraratha and the other (Gandharvas); the lightning, the Bṛhatī, the thirty-three-fold Sāman, the direction above, the four months of the remaining seasons, and with reference to the self, the ear, the voice and the hearing.

This *Praṇava*, the one syllable, originated before the *Tapas*, is the Brahman, the seed of the Veda; all *Mantras* have sprung from this *Praṇava*. (Based on the tr. by V.M. Bedekar & G.B. Palsule)

Commenting on the word *āmināne* (ṚV I.113.2), Yāska (Nir II.20) says that the term means *anyonyasyādhyātmaṃ kurvāṇe*: making each others' (Dawn and Night) inner self (*adhyātma*).

Further, the inner self (*adhyātma*) has been equated with the Supreme Soul (*Ātman*).

तं दुर्दर्शं गूढमनुप्रविष्टं गुहाहितं गह्वरेष्ठं पुराणम् ।
अध्यात्मयोगाधिगमेन देवं मत्वा धीरो हर्षशोकौ जहाति ॥

KaṭhUp II.12

He (the *Ātman*), difficult to be seen, full of mystery, the ancient primeval one lying concealed deep in the cavern, –

He who, with Self-surrender to devotion, comprehends that *Ātman* in one's own innermost self (*adhyātma*) as God, leaves behind (goes beyond) joy and sorrow. (Tr. V.M. Bedekar & G.B. Palsule)

The **Bhagavad-Gītā** states that Brahman is realized in one's own individual self (*adhyātma*).

मयि सर्वाणि कर्माणि संन्यस्याध्यात्मचेतसा ।
निराशीर्निर्ममो भूत्वा युध्यस्व विगतज्वरः ॥

BhG III.30

Renouncing all action in Me, with thy thought resting on the Self, being free from hope, free from selfishness, devoid of fever, do thou fight. (Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

5. Supreme Self

Finally, the term *adhyātma* means the Supreme Self, Brahman, the Ultimate Reality. This meaning is found as early as in the Brāhmaṇa texts.

The **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (IV.6.2ff.) describes a year-long sacrifice (*Sattra*) *Gavāmayana*. Its different subordinate rites and rituals have been compared with different limbs and parts of the body of a man.

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Prāyaṇīya atirātra	breath
Ārambhaṇīya day	speech
Abhiplava-ṣaḍaha	right hand
Trivṛt-stoma	head
Pañcadaśa (hymn)	neck-joints
Saptadaśa (hymn)	chest
Ekaviṃśa (hymn)	belly
Triṇava (hymn)	two sides
Trayastriṃśa (hymn)	spine
Abhijit	right ear
First *Svarasāman*	white part of the eye
Second *Svarasāman*	black part of the eye
Third *Svarasāman*	pupil
Viṣuvat	nose
First backward *Svarasāman*	pupil of the eye
Second backward *Svarasāman*	black in the eye
Third backward *Svarasāman*	white in the eye
Viśvajit	left ear
Go (*stoma*) and *Āyuṣ* (*stoma*)	two downward breathings *avāñcau prāṇau*
Daśarātra	limbs
Mahāvrata	mouth
Udayanīya atirātra	up-breathing (*udāna*)

Such is that year as established in the body (ŚBr XII.2.4.1–16). (Based on the tr. by J. Eggeling)

Questioning as to how these rites and rituals enter man and be united with the vital airs, the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** answers:

सर्वस्तोमं सर्वसामानमेतं संवत्सरमध्यात्मं प्रविष्टम् ।
समं धीर आत्मना कल्पयित्वा ब्रध्नस्यास्ते विष्टपेऽजातशोकः ॥
ŚBr XII.3.1.9

> The Supreme Self (*adhyātma*) has entered into that year endowed with all *stomas* and with all *sāmans* having fashioned him alike with the body, the sage is seated free from pain on the highest of the rudy one (i.e. the Sun). (Tr. J. Eggeling)

In the above passage, *adhyātma* has been used in the sense of Supreme

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Self which has been identified with the Sun. The **Gopatha Brāhmaṇa** (I.1.30) identifies *aum* with the Supreme Spirit (*adhyātma*). The **Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa** (III.351) regards the Sun as the Supreme Self (*adhyātma*).

The Supreme Soul has permeated all organic beings (plants, animals, humans, gods), and inorganic nature (earth, water, fire, air, ether). The same Supreme Spirit abides in the individual man. There is no distinction between the two. The **Aitareya Upaniṣad** succinctly explains this, as follows:

कोऽयम् ? आत्मेति वयमुपास्महे । कतरः स आत्मा ?

येन वा पश्यति, येन वा शृणोति, येन वा गन्धाञ् जिघ्रति, येन वा वाचं व्याकरोति, येन वा स्वादु चास्वादु च विजानाति । यदेतद्धृदयं मनश्चैतत् । संज्ञानमाज्ञानं विज्ञानं प्रज्ञानं मेधा दृष्टिर्धृतिर्मतिर्मनीषा जूतिः स्मृतिः संकल्पः क्रतुरसुः कामो वश इति सर्वाण्येवैतानि प्रज्ञानस्य नामधेयानि भवन्ति ।

एष ब्रह्मा । एष इन्द्रः । एष प्रजापतिः । एते सर्वे देवाः । इमानि च पञ्च महाभूतानि पृथिवी वायुराकाश आपो ज्योतींष्येतानीमानि च क्षुद्रमिश्राणीव बीजानीतराणि चेतराणि चाण्डजानि च जारुजानि च स्वेदजानि चोद्भिज्जानि चाश्वा गावः पुरुषा हस्तिनो यत्किंचेदं प्राणि जङ्गमं च पतत्रि च यच्च स्थावरम् । सर्वं तत् प्रज्ञानेत्रम् । प्रज्ञाने प्रतिष्ठितम् । प्रज्ञानेत्रो लोकः । प्रज्ञा प्रतिष्ठा । प्रज्ञानं ब्रह्म ॥

AitUp III.1–3

Who is this one?

We worship him as the Self (*Ātman*).

Which one is the Self?

[He] whereby one sees, or whereby one hears, or whereby one smells odors, or whereby one articulates speech, or whereby one discriminates the sweet and the unsweet; that which is heart (*hṛdaya*) and mind (*manas*) – that is, consciousness (*saṃjñāna*), perception (*ājñāna*), discrimination (*vijñāna*), intelligence (*prajñāna*), wisdom (*medhas*), insight (*dṛṣṭi*), steadfastness (*dhṛti*), thought (*mati*), thoughtfulness (*manīṣā*), impulse (*jūti*), memory (*smṛti*), conception (*saṃkalpa*), purpose (*kratu*), life (*asu*), desire (*kāma*), will (*vaśa*).

All these, indeed, are appellations of intellígence (*prajñāna*).

He is Brahmā; he is Indra; he is Prajāpati; [he is] all these gods; and these five gross elements (*mahā-bhūtāni*, namely earth (*pṛthivī*), wind (*vāyu*), space (*ākāśa*), water (*ap*), light (*jyotīṃṣi*); these things

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and those which are mingled of the fine (*kṣudra*), as it were; origins (*bīja*) of one sort and another: those born from an egg (*aṇḍa-ja*), and those born from a womb (*jāru-ja*), and those born from sweat (*sveda-ja*), and those born from a sprout (*udbhij-ja*); horses, cows, persons, elephants; whatever breathing thing there is here – whether moving or flying, and what is stationary.

All this is guided by intelligence, is based on intelligence. The world is guided by intelligence. The basis is intelligence. Brahma is intelligence. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Apart from the above five prominent meanings of *adhyātma*, the term has been employed in other senses also. For instance, the **Caraka Saṃhitā** (SūSthā XXV.28) uses the term to mean 'truth or reality' (*muktvaivaṃ vādasaṅghaṭṭamadhyātmamanucintyatām* – "Hence, leave this confrontation of views and think over the reality *adhyātmam*").

The word *adhyātma* has also been used in the sense of inner instruments of cognition. Thus the **Yoga-Sūtra** says:

निर्विचारवैशारद्येऽध्यात्मप्रसादः ॥

YSū I.47

On gaining proficiency in *nirvicāra*, purity in the inner instruments of cognition is developed. (Tr. H. Aranya)

Commenting on the word *adhyātma* H. Aranya says:
Adhyātma is the inner instruments of cognition or the energies of the senses.

Purification of and contemplation on the *adhyātma* leads one to the realization of the Supreme Self (*Paramātman*). By purification is meant the removal of *rajas* and *tamas guṇa*s, and the predominance of the *sattva guṇa* in the individual. The **Nyāya-Sūtra** emphasizes this point:

तदर्थं यमनियमाभ्यामात्मसंस्कारो योगाच्चाध्यात्मविध्युपायैः ॥

NySū IV.2.46

For that purpose (there should be) embellishment of the Soul, by means of restraints (*yama*), and observances (*niyama*) and such other methods of internal discipline as may be learnt from the science of yoga. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

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Vātsyāyana explains the above sūtra as under:

> तस्यापवर्गस्याधिगमाय यमनियमाभ्यामात्मसंस्कारः। यमः समानम् आश्रमिणां धर्मसाधनम्, नियमस्तु विशिष्टम्। आत्मसंस्कारः पुनरधर्महानं धर्मोपचयश्च, योगशास्त्राच्चाध्यात्मविधिः प्रतिपत्तव्यः। स पुनस्तपः, प्राणायामः, प्रत्याहारः, ध्यानम्, धारणेति। इन्द्रियविषयेषु प्रसंख्यानाभ्यासो रागद्वेषप्रहाणार्थः। उपायस्तु योगाचारविधानमिति ॥
>
> NySūBh IV.2.46
>
> For the purpose of attaining Final Release, there should be 'embellishment' of the soul. – 'Restraints' are the means of acquiring merit, common to men in all life-stages; while 'observances' are peculiar to each life-stage. 'Embellishment of the Soul'-consists in the destruction of Demerit and accretion of Merit. 'Internal discipline' should be learnt from the Science of Yoga; it consists of Penance, controlling of breath, Abstraction of Mind, Contemplation, and Concentration of the Mind; and the practice of the renouncing of objects of sense serves to remove attachment and hatred. The other 'methods' consist of the details of conduct laid down for Yoga [such as concentrating of the Mind, eating only particular kinds of food, not staying in one place for any length of time and so forth].
> (Tr. G. N. Jha)

Ganganatha Jha has further explained the sūtra (IV.2.46) as:

> The purification of self (*ātmasaṃskāra*) attained by *yama* and *niyama* is the means of *apavarga*. The *yamas* according to Patañjali are *ahiṃsā, satya, asteya, brahmacarya, aparigraha*. The *niyamas* are: *śauca, santoṣa, tapas, svādhyāya, īśvarapraṇidhāna. Tapas: prāṇāyāma, pratyāhāra, dhyāna, dhāraṇā* all these are intended by the word *adhyātmavidhi*. How the *adhyātmavidhi* purifies the *Ātman*? By *tapas, prāṇāyāma*, etc. the object of the senses are forsaken; infatuation (*rāga*), jealousy (*dveṣa*) disappear, and thereby the *Ātman* becomes able to attain *apavarga* (final beatitude).
> (Tr. G. N. Jha)

There are certain *mantras* which are known as the *ādhyātmika mantras*. The **Atharvaveda-Pariśiṣṭa** (XLII.2.9–11) recommends certain hymns from the **Atharvaveda** to be recited after bath. These hymns are called *Ādhyātmikāni*. They are:

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Asyavāmīya	– AV XI.9	Puruṣa	– AV XIX.6
Kautsa	– AV X.8	Manyu	– AV IV.31; 32
Kauṣmāṇika	– AV VI.114.24	Ucchiṣṭa	– AV XI.7
Bhavāśarvīya	– AV XI.2	Rohita	– AV XIII
Prāṇa	– AV XI.4	Vrātya	– AV XV
Kāla	– AV XIX.53; 54	Viṣāsahi	– AV XVII

Atharvaśiras Upaniṣad.

The **Atharvaveda Pariśiṣṭa** (XLIV.4.2) gives another list of *ādhyātmika* hymns. These hymns are to be recited at the performance of the *śrāddha* ceremony. They are:

Madhuvātā	– **Kauśika-Sūtra** XCI.1
Apratiratha	– **Atharvaveda** XIX.13
Prāṇa-sūkta	– **Atharvaveda** X.4
Puruṣa-sūkta	– **Atharvaveda** XIX.6

The Upaniṣads and portions from the Dharmaśāstra.

The **Kuṇḍikopaniṣad** (XI) recommends that a *saṃnyāsin* should mutter the *adhyātma mantras* for the purification of mind. The *adhyātma mantras* are *praṇavamahāvākyāni*, and **Īśa** etc., one hundred and eight Upaniṣads.

The delight caused by the knowledge of *adhyātma* is the true delight (Saun XI.34); it is the greatest joy (*ibid.* V.24).

The **Jābālopaniṣad** gives a vivid description of a person firmly rooted in the Supreme Self (*adhyātmaniṣṭha*). He is known as *Paramahaṃsa*:

> यथा जातरूपधरो निर्द्वन्द्वो निष्परिग्रहस्तत्तत्त्वब्रह्ममार्गे सम्यक्संपन्नः शुद्धमानसः प्राणसंधारणार्थं यथोक्तकाले विमुक्तो भैक्षमाचरन्नुदरपात्रेण लाभालाभयोः समो भूत्वा शून्यागारदेवगृहतृणकूटवल्मीकवृक्षमूलकुलाल-शालाग्निहोत्रगृहनदीपुलिनगिरिकुहरकन्दरकोटरनिर्झरस्थण्डिलेष्वनिकेत-वास्यप्रयत्नो निर्ममः शुक्लध्यानपरायणोऽध्यात्मनिष्ठोऽशुभकर्मनिर्मूलनपरः संन्यासेन देहत्यागं करोति स परमहंसो नाम स परमहंसो नामेति ।
>
> JāUp 6

Naked as he was born, above the pairs of opposites (joy and sorrow, etc.), without belongings, wholly devoted to the way to truth, the Brahman, with a pure heart, going out, without any restriction

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aimlessly for begging alms at prescribed hour only to sustain his life, with the belly as his utensil, even-tempered whether he gets anything or not – staying homeless, whether in a deserted house, in a temple, on a heap of grass, on an ant-hill, at the roots of a tree, in a potter's workshop, in a fire sanctuary, on a river bank, in a mountain cave, in a ravine, in a hallow tree, at a waterfall, or on bare ground, not striving, free from the feeling of 'mine', given to pure contemplation, firmly rooted in the Supreme Self, eradicating all evil deeds, – who becomes free from the body by means of renunciation, he is called a Paramahaṃsa – he is called a Paramahaṃsa.
(Tr. V.M. Bedekar & G.B. Palsule)

Viṣṇu's cosmic sleep at the end of an aeon is termed as: *adhyātma-yoga-nidrā* (MBh I.19.13). Kṛṣṇa says in the **Bhagavad-Gītā** (X.32), "Of all the sciences, I am the science of the Self (*adhyātmavidyā vidyānām*)". Arjuna regards the tenth chapter of the **Bhagavad-Gītā** as *adhyātmasaṃjñitam* (BhG XI.1). The same text advises:

निर्मानमोहा जितसङ्गदोषाः अध्यात्मनित्या विनिवृत्तकामाः ।
द्वन्द्वैर्विमुक्ताः सुखदुःखसंज्ञैर्गच्छन्त्यमूढाः पदमव्ययं तत् ॥

BhG XV.5

Free from pride and delusion, with the evil of attachment conquered, ever dwelling in the Self, their desires having completely turned away, liberated from the pairs of opposites known as pleasure and pain, the undeluded reach that Goal Eternal.
(Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

One often comes across the two words *adhyātma* and *adhidaivata* used adjoining each other in the Vedic literature. Such usage is generally in connection with some Vedic rite or ritual. *Ukhā* (firepan) is regarded as the self (*ātmā*) of Agni. The **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (VI.5) deals with the preparation of and the rites connected with the *ukhā*. The same text (VI.5.3.3–5) explains two-fold character of *Ukhā* rite, viz. in terms of *adhidaivata* and *adhyātma* while preparing the *Viśvajyotis* bricks:

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Adhidaivata

Three Viśvajyotis bricks	–	Three deities Agni, Vāyu and Āditya
Three bricks are made from the same clay that was used for making fire-pan.	–	Three gods were produced from the three worlds
Bricks are marked with three lines	–	Threefold are these gods: Āditya (sky), Vāyu (air) and Agni (earth)

Adhyātma

Ukhā	–	Self (body) of Agni
The *Aṣāḍhā* (invincible brick)	–	Speech (*vāgaṣāḍhā*)
The *Aṣāḍhā* brick is made from the same clay as used for *Ukhā.*	–	The speech is of the body
The *Aṣāḍhā* brick is marked with the three lines	–	The speech is divided in three kinds: 1. *ṛcaḥ* 2. *yajūṃṣi* 3. *sāmāni* or threefold form of speech: i. *upāṃśu* (low voice) ii. *vyantaram* (half-loud) iii. *uccaiḥ* (loud)
Viśvajyotis bricks	–	Offspring, generation
Sacrificer makes the *Viśvajyotis* bricks from the same clay as of *Ukhā.*	–	Sacrificer produces offspring from his own self (*ātmanaḥ*)
The bricks are marked with three lines	–	Generation is three fold: 1. father 2. mother 3. son or 1. *garbha* (embryo) 2. *ulbam* (inner membrane) 3. *jarāyu* (outer membrane)

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Similarly the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (VIII.7.4.12–19) deals with the layer-filling (*citi-purīṣa*) in the *Agnicayana*. Here again, the Brāhmaṇa gives twofold interpretation:

Adhidevata

First layer	–	terrestrial world, cattle
Second layer	–	aerial world, birds
Third layer	–	sky, stars
Fourth layer	–	sacrifice, gifts
Fifth layer	–	yajamāna, progeny
Sixth layer	–	heavenly world (*svarga*), gods
Seventh layer	–	immortality

Adhyātma

First layer	–	Legs and downward flowing vital air
filling of soil in the first layer	–	filling of soil means flesh with which Agni's body is covered
bricks	–	bones
Second layer	–	above legs, below waist
Third layer	–	waist
Fourth layer	–	above the waist, below neck
Fifth layer	–	neck
Sixth layer	–	head
Seventh layer	–	vital airs

Many a time, the words *adhidevata* and *adhyātma* have been used conjointly with the word *adhiyajña* in sacrificial parlance. The **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (X.5.2.5–7) employs these three terms while giving the mystic interpretation of the fire-altar:

Adhidevata

Orb (of the Sun)	–	foundation of light (*arcis*) and that man (*puruṣa*)

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Adhiyajña

Orb (of the Sun)	–	gold plate (*rukma*) placed under the altar
glowing light (*arcis*)	–	lotus leaf (*puṣkaraparṇa*) placed under the altar
Divine waters	–	lotus leaf
man in the yonder orb	–	gold man in the altar

Adhyātma

Shinning orb	–	gold plate – white in the eye
glowing light	–	gold lead – black in the eye
man in the yonder Sun's orb	–	gold man – man in the right eye

(cf. Nir XIII.11 on ṚV I.164.39.)

The Brahmanic postulation of the Puruṣa (man, the spirit) in the orb of the Sun and the Puruṣa in the right eye of a man, representing respectively *adhidevata* and *adhyātma*, has been carried on in the Upanisadic speculations also. The **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** (II.3.1–6) describes Brahman in respect of *adhidaivata* and *adhyātma* as given in the following table:

Adhidaivata

Brahman

(1) With form	(2) Formless
a. different from wind, world-space	a. wind
b. mortal	b. immortal
c. immobile (*sthitam*)	c. mobile (*calam*)
d. existing (sat)	d. transcending (*tyam*)
e. Its essence: the Sun	e. Its essence, Puruṣa in the orb of the Sun

Adhyātma

Brahman

(1) With form	(2) Formless
a. different from breath and space in the inner part of the body	a. breath
b. mortal	b. immortal
c. immobile (*sthitam*)	c. mobile (*calam*)
d. existing here (*sat*)	d. yonder transcendental (*tyam*)
e. Its essence, the eyes	e. *puruṣa* in the right eye

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The form of this Puruṣa is like a yellow saffron-garment, like a white sheep-skin, like a (red) Indragopa beetle, like the flame of the fire, like a white lotus flower, or like a lightning when it suddenly flashes forth (for the description of the Puruṣa in the eye, cf. JaimBr II.63, and Puruṣa in the Sun, ChUp I.6.1, 6–7, also BrSūBh III.3.20).

Further, it is believed in the Upanisadic thought that Brahman assumes two forms: cosmic and psychical. The cosmic Brahman manifests itself in Agni, Āditya, Candramas, and Vidyut. The psychical Brahman manifests itself in *vāk, cakṣus, śrotram*, and *manas.*

At the time of dissolution, these divinities dissolve into Vāyu-prāṇa, from where they re-emerge at the time of evolution. In the Upanisadic parlance, this process is known as *daivaparimaraḥ* (death of the divinities). According to the **Kauṣītaki Upaniṣad** (II.12,13) the process is as follows:

Adhidaivata

Brahman
- Agni – its *tejas* goes to Āditya; Prāṇa, to Vāyu,
- Āditya – its *tejas* goes to the Candramas (moon); Prāṇa, to Vāyu,
- Candramas – its *tejas* goes to the Vidyut (lightning); Prāṇa, to Vāyu,
- Vidyut – its *tejas* goes to *Dik* (directions); Prāṇa, to Vāyu.

All these divinities having entered into Vāyu, being dead, do not die. They rise from that.

Adhyātma

Brahman
- *Vāk* – its *tejas* goes to the eyes; *prāṇa*, to *prāṇa*,
- *Cakṣus* – its *tejas* goes to the ears; *prāṇa*, to *prāṇa*,
- *Śrotram* – its *tejas* goes to mind; *prāṇa*, to *prāṇa*,
- *Manas* – its *tejas* goes to *prāṇa*; *prāṇa*, to *prāṇa.*

All these divinities having entered into *prāṇa* and dying in *prāṇa* actually do not die. They rise again from it. In the **Aitareya Brāhmaṇa** (VIII.28) this process is known as *brahmaṇaḥ parimaraḥ.* A similar perception is found in the **Chāndogya Upaniṣad** (IV.3.1–3) where these two, the wind and the *prāṇa*, are regarded as the gatherers (*saṃvargau*); the wind among the divinities (*adhideveṣu*) and the *prāṇa* among the objects of self (*adhyātma*).

Yāska interprets Vedic *mantras* in two ways: *adhidaivata* 'with regard to the divinities', and *ādhyātmika* 'with regard to the self (body)'. For instance, the **Nirukta** (III.12) interprets the **Ṛgveda** (I.164.21) in two ways:

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यत्रा सुपर्णा अमृतस्य भागमनिमेषं विदथाभि स्वरन्ति ।
इनो विश्वस्य भुवनस्य गोपाः स मा धीरः पाकमत्रा विवेश ॥

यत्र [सुपर्णाः] सुपतना आदित्यरश्मयः । अमृतस्य भागमुदकस्य । अनिमिषन्तो वेदनेनाभिस्वरन्तीति वा । अभिप्रयन्तीति वा । ईश्वरः सर्वेषां भूतानां गोपायितादित्यः । स मा धीरः पाकमत्रा विवेशेति । धीरो धीमान् । पाकः पक्तव्यो भवति । विपश्चिप्रज्ञ आदित्यः । इत्युपनिषद्वर्णो भवति । इत्यधिदैवतम् । अथाध्यात्मम् । यत्र [सुपर्णाः] सुपतनानीन्द्रियाणी । अमृतस्य भागं ज्ञानस्य । अनिमिषन्तो वेदनेनाभिस्वरन्तीति वा । अभिप्रयन्तीति वा । ईश्वरः सर्वेषामिन्द्रियाणां गोपायितात्मा । स मा धीरः पाकमत्रा विवेशेति । धीरो धीमान् । पाकः पक्तव्यो भवति । विपश्चिप्रज्ञ आत्मा । इत्यात्मगतिमाचष्टे ।

Nir III.12

Adhidaivata

Where (birds) of beautiful wings vigilantly invoke the portion of immortality with knowledge. The lord, the guardian of the entire universe, he, the wise one, here approached me the immature.

Where (birds) [of beautiful wings], i.e. rays of the Sun falling in a beautiful manner, invoke, i.e. move towards the portion of immortality, i.e. of water, with consciousness. The lord, the guardian of all created beings, i.e. the Sun; he, the wise one, here approached me, the immature one. Wise, having intelligence. Immature, i.e. one who is to be matured. The Sun is called as of mature wisdom in the description of the Upaniṣad. This is with regard to the deity (*adhidaivata*).

Adhyātma

Now about the self. Where (the birds) of beautiful wings, i.e. senses, easily going astray, vigilantly invoke, i.e. move towards, the portion of immortality, i.e. of knowledge, with consciousness. The lord, the guardian of all senses, i.e. the soul; he, the wise one, here approached me, the immature. Wise, having intelligence. Immature, i.e. one who is to be matured. 'The soul is of mature wisdom', describes the characteristic of the soul. (Tr. L. Sarup)

Adhibhūta-Adhidaiva-Adhyātma

The concept of *adhibhūta-adhidaiva-adhyātma* together occurs for the first time in the Upanisadic thought. All worlds and all beings have been divided in these three categories. The **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** (III.7.1–23) explains *adhibhūta* as organic beings, the material world; *adhidaiva* as nature-phenomena and *adhyātma* as individual self (body). *Adhibhūta* constitutes all the visible

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material world and animate or inanimate beings. *Adhidaivata* comprises twelve natural phenomena, namely 1. wind 2. earth 3. waters 4. fire 5. aerial space 6. heavens 7. Sun 8. quarters 9. moon and stars 10. ether (space) 11. darkness and 12. light. *Adhyātma* consists of 1. breath 2. speech 3. eyes 4. ears 5. mind 6. skin 7. knowledge (*vijñāna*) and 8. semen.

The **Subālopaniṣad** (V.1–4) provides the following list of objects belonging to each category:

Adhibhūta	**Adhidaivata**	**Adhyātma**
draṣṭavya	*ādityaḥ*	*cakṣuḥ*
śrotavya	*diśaḥ*	*śrotram*
ghrātavya	*pṛthivī*	*nāsā*
rasayitavya	*varuṇaḥ*	*jihvā*
sparśayitavya (*spraṣṭavya*)	*vāyuḥ*	*tvak*
mantavya	*candramā*	*manas*
boddhavya	*brahmā*	*buddhi*
ahaṅkartavya	*rudraḥ*	*ahaṅkāra*
cetayitavya	*kṣetrajñaḥ*	*cittam*
vaktavya	*agniḥ*	*vāk*
ādātavya	*indraḥ*	*hastau*
visarjitavya	*mṛtyuḥ*	*pādau*
visarjitavya	*mṛtyuḥ*	*pāyuḥ*
ānandayitavya	*prajāpatiḥ*	*upasthaḥ*

The **Bhāgavata Purāṇa** explains the three terms, as follows:

> योऽध्यात्मिकोऽयं पुरुषः सोऽसावेवाधिदैविकः ।
> यस्तत्रोभयविच्छेदः स स्मृतो ह्याधिभौतिकः ॥
>
> BhāgPur II.10.8
>
> The individual person possessing different instruments of senses is called the *ādhyātmika* person, and the individual controlling deity of the senses is called *ādhidaivika.* That one who is distinct from both of these two is considered to be *ādhibhautika* person.
> (Based on the tr. by B.S. Prabhupada)

As already quoted the three words also refer to three types of pain in the world (SāṃKā I; SāṃSū I.1). The **Viṣṇu Purāṇa** provides details of three kinds of pain as follows:

> आध्यात्मिकादि मैत्रेय ज्ञात्वा तापत्रयं बुधः ।
> उत्पन्नज्ञानवैराग्यः प्राप्नोत्यात्यंतिकं लयम् ॥
> आध्यात्मिकोपि द्विविधश्शारीरो मानसस्तथा ।

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शारीरो बहुभिर्भेदैर्भिद्यते श्रूयतां च सः ॥
शिरोरोगप्रतिश्यायज्वरशूलभगंदरैः ।
गुल्मार्शःश्वयथुश्वासच्छर्द्यादिभिरनेकधा ॥
तथाक्षिरोगातीसारकुष्ठांगामयसंज्ञितैः ।
भिद्यते देहजस्तापो मानसं श्रोतुमर्हसि ॥
कामक्रोधभयद्वेषलोभमोहविषादजः ।
शोकासूयावमानेर्ष्यामात्सर्यादिमयस्तथा ॥
मानसोऽपि द्विजश्रेष्ठ तापो भवति नैकधा ।
इत्येवमादिभिर्भेदैस्तापो ह्याध्यात्मिकः स्मृतः ॥

ViPur VI.5.1–6

Ādhyātmika (pain)

Two kinds

1. *śārīra* (bodily)

śiroroga	(affliction of the head)
pratiśyāya	(catarrh)
śvāsaddardya	(intumescence sickness)
akṣiroga	(ophtholmia)
atisāra	(dysentry)
kuṣṭha	(leprosy)
jvara	(fever)
śūla	(cholic)
bhagandara	(fistula)
gulmārśa	(spleen)
śvayathu	(hemorrhoids)

2. *Mānasa* (mental)

kāma (love)	*viṣāda* (despair)
krodha (anger)	*śoka* (sorrow)
bhaya (fear)	*asūyā* (malice)
dveṣa (hate)	*avamāna* (disdain)
lobha (covetousness)	*īrṣyā* (jealousy)
moha (stupefaction)	*mātsarya* (envy)

Ādhibhautika (pain)

The pain inflicted upon men by beasts (*mṛga*), birds (*pakṣī*), men (*manuṣya*), goblin (*piśāca*), snakes (*uraga*), fiends (*rākṣasa*), and reptiles (*sarīsṛpa*).

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Ādhidaivika (pain)

The pain caused by cold wind (*śītavāta*), hot wind (*uṣṇavāta*), rain (*varṣāmbu*), lightning (*vidyut*) and other atmospheric phenomena. (Based on the tr. by H.H. Wilson)

The **Yoga-Sūtra Bhāṣya** mentions three kinds of portents:

तत्राध्यात्मिकं घोषं स्वदेहे पिहितकर्णो न शृणोति, ज्योतिर्वा नेत्रेऽवष्टब्धे न पश्यति । तथाधिभौतिकं यमपुरुषान्पश्यति, पितृनतीतानागतान् अकस्मात्पश्यति । तथाधिदैविकं स्वर्गमकस्मात्सिद्धान्वा पश्यति । विपरीतं वा सर्वमित्यनेन वा जानात्यपरान्तमुपस्थितमिति ॥

YSūBh III.22

Ādhyātmika (personal) portents –

The personal ones are like not hearing any sound within the body on closing the ears, or not seeing any effulgent light on the eyes being closed (pressed by fingers).

Ādhibhautika (elemental) portents –

Seeing the messengers of the god, of death, or the wraths of departed forefathers.

Ādhidaivika (divine) portents –

Like seeing the heavens or the *siddhas* (ethereals) suddenly, or seeing everything contrary to those seen before. (Based on the tr. by H. Aranya)

After this three tier classification of entire existence, the Indian ontology reaches its climax in the postulation of an entity that is deemed to be the creator, the regulator, and the governor of the universe. That entity is *Ātman. Ātman* guides and holds together all worlds and all beings from outside as *sūtrātman* (like a piece of thread entwining a bunch of flowers), and guides and holds together every phenomenon of nature (*ādhidaivika*), all beings (*ādhibhautika*), and all organs (*ādhyātmika*), as the inner soul (*antarātman*), or the inner controller (*antaryāmin*). There is total identity and complete oneness between the Universal Soul (*Paramātman*) and individual soul (*antarātman*). The **Aitareya Āraṇyaka** (II.1.3) declares: *ayaṃpuruṣo brahmaṇo lokaḥ* (This individual man is the world of Brahman). It is this *Ātman* which pervades all things from inside as also all individuals from outside. This *Ātman* is the subject of knowledge. He is the Puruṣa, the imperishable Brahman (*akṣaraṃ brahma*) (cf. BrSūBh I.2.18).

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Commenting on the **Bhagavad-Gītā** Śaṅkara avers:

> तस्यैव परस्य ब्रह्मणः प्रतिदेहं प्रत्यगात्मभावः स्वभावः । स्वभावोऽध्यात्मम् उच्यते, आत्मानं देहमधिकृत्य प्रत्यगात्मतया प्रवृत्तं परमार्थब्रह्मावसानं वस्तु स्वभावोऽध्यात्ममुच्यतेऽध्यात्मशब्देनाभिधीयते ।
>
> BhGŚBh VIII.1–4
>
> The same Supreme Brahman existing as the Ego, as the Innermost Self as the *Pratyagātman*, in every individual body, is said to be *adhyātma*: that which first shows itself as the Innermost Self in the body and turns out in the end to be identical with the Supreme Reality, the Brahman, is known by the term '*adhyātma*'.
> (Tr. A. Mahadeva Sastry)

The **Chāndogya Upaniṣad** refers to this *adhyātma* which has to be understood and cognized:

> अथ यदिदमस्मिन् ब्रह्मपुरे दहरं पुण्डरीकं वेश्म दहरोऽस्मिन्नन्तराकाशः । तस्मिन्यदन्तस्तद् अन्वेष्टव्यम्, तद्वाव विजिज्ञासितव्यमिति ।
>
> ChUp VIII.1.1
>
> Now, here in this city of Brahman is an abode, a small lotus flower; within it is a small space. What is within that should be sought, for that assuredly is what one should desire to understand.
> (Tr. S. Radhakrishnan)

Buddhism

In Buddhist thought, the word *ātman* is used in a secondary sense for the mind.

> आत्मशब्दो हि चित्तम्, आत्मा इत्युपचर्यत इति वक्ष्यते । आत्मन्यधि अध्यात्मम् । अध्यात्ममेव आध्यात्मिकम् । आत्मनि चित्तलक्षणे कर्त्तव्ये हेतुरित्ययमर्थ आध्यात्मिकशब्देनोच्यते ।
>
> Sphuṭārthā on AbhidhKoBh I.9
>
> The word *ātman* is used for mind. *Ātman* has secondary use. *Adhyātman* means regarding 'self' (*ātman*). That which is regarding self is *ādhyātmika*. The word *ādhyātmika* here is so-called because it refers to *ātman*, i.e. that which is caused by mind-nature.
> (Tr. N.H. Samtani)

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The collective cognition of whatever could be taken to be 'ourselves' is also known as *ādhyātmika.*

> अज्झत्तत्तिके (मा. २०) 'एवं पवत्तमाना मयं अत्ता' ति गहणं, 'गमिस्सामा' ति इमिना विय अधिप्पायेन अत्तानं अधिकारं कत्वा पवत्ता ति अज्झत्ता।
>
> Aṭṭh II.36 (p. 137)
>
> In the triplet of 'Personal' this word refers to states which occur after making a locus of selves as though with the understanding 'we shall consider or take things thus existing to be we ourselves'. (Tr. Pe Maung Tin)

Adhyātmacintā, i.e. thinking of one's self inwardly is also a compound used in Buddhist thought.

> सब्बदा सीलसंपन्नो पञ्ञवा सुसमाहितो ।
> अज्झत्ताचिन्ती सतिमा ओघं तरति दुत्तरं ॥
>
> SutNip 174
>
> The one always endowed with virtuous conduct, having wisdom, well-concentrated, thinking inwardly, possessing mindfulness, crosses the flood which is hard to cross. (Tr. K.R. Norman)

> पिण्डं च भिक्खु समयेन लद्धा । एको पटिकम्म रहो निसीदे ।
> अज्झत्तचिन्ती न मनो बहिद्धा । निच्छारये संगहितत्तभावो ॥
>
> SutNip 388
>
> And having received alms-food at the right time, having returned alone, a bhikkhu should sit down in solitude. Thinking of internal things, he should not let his mind go out side, (having his body well-constrained). (Tr. K.R. Norman)

The above advice is given in the context of bhikkhu's time of wandering for alms and his other activities as advised by Buddha.

The counterpart of *adhyātma* is said to be *bahiḥ*, i.e. outside.

> यं किंचि धम्ममभिजञ्ञा । अज्झत्तं अथ वाऽपि बहिद्धा ।
> न तेन मानं कुब्बेथ । न हि सा निब्बुति सतं वुत्ता ॥
>
> SutNip 917
>
> Whatever doctrine he may understand (whatever virtue he may recognise), in himself or in another, he would not be stubborn about

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it, for this is not called quenching (extinction) by the good.
(Based on the tr. by K.R. Norman)

The idea of 'inner' and 'outer' or 'internal' and 'external' is extended to the six cognitions and the six points of support, all of them being taken to be internal and six objects like *rūpa* are said to be external:

द्वादशाध्यात्मिकाः, हित्वा रूपादीन्, धर्मसंज्ञकः ।
सभागस्तत्सभागाश्च शेषाः, यो न स्वकर्मकृत् ॥

षड् विज्ञानानि षडाश्रयाः – इत्येते द्वादश धातव आध्यात्मिकाः ।
रूपादयस्तु षड् विषयधातवो बाह्याः ।
आत्मन्यसति कथमाध्यात्मिकम्? बाह्यं वा? अहङ्कारसन्निश्रयत्वाच्चित्तम् 'आत्मा' इत्युपचर्यते ।

AbhidhKoBh I.39

Twelve are internal, that is all other than visible *rūpa* etc. the *dhātu* named *dharma* is '*sabhāga*': the remaining ones are also '*tatsabhāga*', that does not do its work. (Twelve are internal (all *dhātus*) other than (six) *rūpa* etc.)

The six cognitions and the six points of support: these twelve *dhātus* are internal. The *rūpa* etc. the six *viṣayadhātus* are external.

When there is no '*ātman*' how is anything internal or external? They metaphorically call *citta-ātman*, because of the mind-stuff, being the object (*saniścaya*) of the idea of the ego. (Tr. S. Jha)

The **Sphuṭārthā** (commentary) on above deals with the technicalities in etymology of the word '*adhyātma*'.

Tantra-Āgama

Adhibhūta and *adhyātma* are interrelated terms especially with reference to sense and motor organs. This significant characteristic was already present in the view of ancient thinkers. Āgamas always tried to unify both psychic and material aspects of *indriyas* to the spirit which is technically known as *adhidaiva*, i.e. the aspect of the spirit. The dull gross matter with its subtle nature finally goes to rest in the divine which is known as *adhidaiva*, i.e. with its reference to the deity, the superintending Lord of each.

For example, every sense and motor organ is considered to be the centre to receive sensation of a particular type. But other organs different from it are

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incapable to respond, just as the organ of hearing is connected with the body, similarly all the sense and motor organs have the unique character to be located in the body, i.e. their *adhyātma* aspect, while their *adhibhūta* character is the object to be cognised and the object that is aimed at (cf. MPā XVIII.58–78).

The inner sense organs which impel all the *indriya*s are known as *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra*:

... मनश्चात्रोभयात्मकम् ।
विषयस्तस्य संकल्पः सोमश्चास्याधिदेवता ॥
इन्द्रियाणां तु सामर्थ्यं संकल्पेनात्मवर्तिना ।
करोत्यन्तःस्थितं भूयस्ततोऽन्तःकरणं मनः ॥
अहंकारस्तथाध्यात्ममभिमानः स्वको ध्रुवम् ।
आधिभौतिकमेवोक्तं रुद्रस्तस्याधिदेवता ॥
बुद्धिरध्यात्मभावेन स्वभावेनैव संस्थिता ।
बोद्धव्यमधिभूताख्यं तत्र ब्रह्माधिदेवता ॥

MPā XVIII.80, 82, 84–85

Mind has dual characteristics. Its object is desire (*saṃkalpa*) and moon is its superintending deity.

The capability of the sense and motor organs functioned by the mind really abides in the self and the inner organ impels the force to become externally inclined. Egoism is the aspect of its psychic nature and self-conceit is indeed its innate nature. This is stated to be its material aspect while Rudra is its superintending deity. *Buddhi*, intellect steadily abides in the self very closely with its intrinsic character. The object to be grasped intellectually is its material character while Brahmā is its deity. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

In the same text it is stated that all the instruments of knowledge and action have the characteristic of *adhyātma* abiding in the body, *adhibhūta* the physical and *adhidaiva* the divine aspect each. For example, we may cite *śrotra*, the organ of hearing:

श्रोत्रं श्रवणधर्मित्वात्प्रतिगृह्णाति स्वोचितम् ॥
विषयं शब्दनामानं व्यक्तं वाव्यक्तमेव वा ।
तदध्यात्ममिति ख्यातं श्रोतव्यमधिभूतता ॥
विहिता कारणेनात्र दिशस्तत्राधिदेवताः ।

MPā XVIII.56cd–58ab

The organ of hearing is attributed with the property of hearing. Therefore it is able to receive its proper object. The object of it is the sound either manifest or non-manifest. The organ of hearing is

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(*śrotra*) known to be the aspect of the self, the object to be heard is its state of material form (*adhibhūtatā*) which is ascertained as its cause, while the superintending deities are *adhidevatā*, the directions. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

Manifestation in the Arts

In music, the identification of the three registers of musical sound, i.e. *adhibhūta* with *adhyātma*-viewed in the locations in the human body are so strong that the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** equates the two and mentions only the *adhyātma* aspect while describing the three *sthāna*s of music, subsuming the *adhibhūta*.

त्रीणि स्थानानि – उरः कण्ठः शिर इति । भवत्यपि च –
शारीर्यामथ वीणायां त्रिभ्यः स्थानेभ्य एव तु ।
उरसः शिरसः कण्ठात् स्वरः काकु प्रवर्तते ॥

NŚ XVII.105ab, 106

There are three *sthāna*s (locations) in chest, throat and cerebrum. It has also been said that in the bodily *vīṇā, svara* or *kāku* emanate from the three *sthāna*s alone, viz. chest, throat and cerebrum ('*kāku*' here includes all distinct qualities of song covering pitch, loudness, timbre and duration).

Adhibhūta and *adhyātma* are intertwined in the sense that the process of sound-production is described with exclusive reference to the human body, mind and *ātman*. For example, the following passage embodies this approach. Incidentally, the basic unity between the sound in speech and music is implicit here; no dichotomy between the two is conceived.

आत्मा विवक्षमाणोऽयं मनः प्रेरयते मनः ।
कायस्थं वह्निमाहन्ति स प्रेरयति मारुतम् ॥
ब्रह्मग्रन्थिस्थितः सोऽथ क्रमाद्ऊर्ध्वपथे चरन् ।
नाभिहृत्कण्ठमूर्धास्येष्वाविर्भावयति ध्वनिम् ॥

SR I.3.3–4

Desirous of speech, the individuated being impels the mind and the mind activates the fire or the battery of power situated in the body, which in turn stimulates air or the vital force. The vital force stationed around the root of the navel, rising upwards gradually manifests *nāda*, in the navel, the heart, the throat, the cerebrum and the cavity of the mouth as it passes through them.

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Thus *adhibhūta* in the form of fire is activated by the mind which in turn is stimulated by the *ātman* and 'air' is propelled by fire; the air, touches five locations (*sthānas*) in the human body. Out of the five, only three are operative in music; they are identified with the lower, middle and high registers called *mandra, madhya* and *tāra.*

व्यवहारे त्वसौ त्रेधा हृदि मन्द्रोऽभिधीयते ।
कण्ठे मध्यो मूर्ध्नि तारो द्विगुणश्चोत्तरोत्तरः ॥

SR I.3.7

However, in actual practice it is three-fold, called *mandra* in the heart, *madhya* in the throat and *tāra* in the head and is successively double in pitch. (Tr. R.K. Shringy and P.L. Sharma)

As regards *adhidaiva*, following contexts of the **Nāṭya-Śāstra** and the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** are revealing. They illustrate the basic unity between 'inner'; and 'outer', the physical and divine. In the **Nāṭya-Śāstra**, we come across the following:

A. The *devatās* assigned specific locations on the stage (NŚ I.84–97)

Parts of the auditorium and actors (adhibhūta and adhyātma)	**Devatās assigned for protection (adhidaiva)**
maṇḍapa (canopy)	Candramā (moon)
main directions	Lokapālas
sub-directions	Mārutas
nepathya (backstage)	Mitra
ambara (sky, ceiling)	Varuṇa
vedikā (altar)	Vahni (fire)
bhāṇḍa (drum)	All the gods
pillars	The four *varṇas* (Brāhmaṇa, Kṣatriya, Vaiśya, Śūdra)
space between pillars	Ādityas and Rudras
dhāraṇīs (beams)	Bhūtas
śālā (gallery)	Apsaras
All the *veśmas* (rooms)	Yakṣiṇīs
mahīpṛṣṭha (surface of the earth)	Mahodadhi (Ocean)
dvāraśālās (door complex, entrance)	Kṛtānta (Yama) and Kāla (time)
dvārapatra (door-shafts)	Mahābala Nāga-mukhya (two) (very strong, prominent *nāgas* in dual number)

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dehalī (threshold) and its top	Yamadaṇḍa (sceptre of Yama) and Śūla (spear)
side of the *raṅgapīṭha*	Mahendra
mattavāraṇī (lit. that which stabilises the intoxicated ones or which has intoxicated elephants; two side corridors of the stage used for peripheral acting or partial entry/exit)	Vidyut (lightning), which kills the demons
pillars of the *mattavāraṇī*	Bhūtas, Yakṣas & Piśācas and very strong Guhyakas
jarjara (ritualistic staff)	Vajra (thunderbolt), the killer of demons.
Parva (joints or knots of the *jarjara*)	Chief among gods
the top joint	Brahmā
the second joint	Śaṅkara
the third joint	Viṣṇu
the fourth joint	Skanda
the fifth joint	Mahānāgas (the great Serpents, viz. Śeṣa, Vāsukī and Takṣaka)
Centre of the *raṅgapīṭha* (stage)	Brahmā
underneath the *raṅgapīṭha*	Yakṣa, Guhyaka, Pannaga, whose abode is *pātāla*
nāyaka (hero)	Indra
nāyikā (heroine)	Sarasvatī
vidūṣaka	Oṃkāra
The remaining characters	Hara (Śiva)

B. The *devatās* of *rasa* (NŚ VI.44–45)

Rasa (adhyātma)	**Devatā (adhidaiva)**
śṛṅgāra	Viṣṇu
hāsya	Pramatha (a class of demons attending on Śiva)
raudra	Rudra
karuṇa	Yama
bībhatsa	Mahākāla
bhayānaka	Kāla
vīra	Mahendra
adbhuta	Brahmā

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In the **Bṛhaddeśī** (75–76) and the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** (I.3.57cd–58ab), *devatās* of *svaras* are mentioned as follows:

A. Svara	Devatā	
	BṛD	SR
Ṣaḍja	Brahmā	Vahni
Ṛṣabha	Vahni	Brahmā
Gāndhāra	Bhāratī	Sarasvatī
Madhyama	Hara	Sarva (Śiva)
Pañcama	Śatayajña (Indra)	Śrīśa (Viṣṇu)
Dhaivata		Gaṇeśa
Niṣāda		Sūrya

B. *Devatās* of the eight groups of letters as in the **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** (IV.60cd–61ab):

a-varga (all the vowels) – Soma (Candra)
k-varga – Bhauma (Maṅgala)
c-varga – Budha
ṭ-varga – Jīva (Guru)
t-varga – Śukra
p-varga – Saurī (Śani)
y-varga (*ya, ra, la, va*) – Ravi
ś-varga (*śa, ṣa, sa, ha*) – Tamas

C. *Devatās* of the three syllables of *elā* (SR IV.42)

a – Viṣṇu
i – Kusumāyudha (Cupid)
la – Lakṣmī

and of the sixteen *padas* of *elā-prabandha* (SR IV.43–46)

Pada	Devatā	Pada	Devatā
kāma	Padmālayā	*śobhī*	Mohinī
manmathavat	Patriṇī	*suśobhī*	Jayā
kānta	Rañjanī	*gītaka*	Gaurī
jit	Sumukhī	*ucita*	Brāhmī
matta	Śacī	*vicitra*	Mātaṅgī
vikārī	Vareṇyā	*vāsava*	Caṇḍikā
māndhātā	Vāyuvegā	*mṛdu*	Vijayā
sumati	Vedinī	*sucitra*	Cāmuṇḍā

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D. *Devatās* in *gadya-prabandhas* (SR IV.184–190)

utkarikā	Rudra
cūrṇa	Brahmā
lalita	Madana
vṛttagandhi	Muni
khaṇḍa	Gaṇeśa
citra	Viṣṇu

In the **Nāṭya-Śāstra**, *adhyātma* is mentioned as one of the three *pramāṇas* (means of valid knowledge) of *nāṭya* –

लोको वेदस्तथाध्यात्मं प्रमाणं त्रिविधं स्मृतम् ।
वेदाध्यात्मपदार्थेषु प्रायो नाट्यं प्रतिष्ठितम् ॥
वेदाध्यात्मोपपन्नं तु शब्दच्छन्दः समन्वितम् ।
लोकसिद्धं भवेत् सिद्धं नाट्यं लोकात्मकं तथा ॥

NŚ XXV.120–121

Loka, veda and *adhyātma* – these are known to form the threefold *pramāṇa* (testimony) (in *nāṭya*).

Loka is the threefold means of right knowledge, viz. perception, inference and truth conveyed verbally. The revealed text is Veda and intuitive knowledge of the self or personal experience is *adhyātma.* Drama is virtually based on the content of Veda and *adhyātma.* Drama composed of Veda and *adhyātma* is couched in words and metres, is testified by *loka* (actual life).

Adhyātma here could be taken to stand for the experience of the poet, actor or the spectator at different levels. Although '*adhyātma*' does not occur here alongwith *adhibhūta* or *adhidaiva*, its inclusion in the three testimonies of drama is significant for our study.

In music, *rāga* has been said to have two forms, viz. *nādamaya*, i.e. made of sound which is the object of aural perception and the other *devatāmaya* which is to be realized through *dhyāna* (contemplation).

उक्तं रूपमनेकं तत्तद्रागस्य नादमयमेवम् ।
अथ देवतामयमिह क्रमतः कथ्ये तदैकैकम् ॥

Rāga V.168

The *nādamaya* form of respective *rāgas* has been spoken of in manifold ways, now I give the *devatāmaya* form of each one of them which is single in each case.

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The object of aural perception has been transferred to the realm of visual contemplation which forms a part of any *upāsanā*. We need not ascribe divinity to this *devatāmaya rūpa* but it is not perceptible to the senses and is to be subjected to visual contemplation. The combination of perceptible and imperceptible is notable here for our study.

In sculpture, the horizontal line has been identified with water, the vertical line with fire and the diagonal line with air.

उत्थितरेखा अग्निरूपा पार्श्वगा अब्रूपाः, तिर्यग् रेखा मरुद्रूपा इति ॥

VSUp II.21

The upward line is of the nature of fire, the horizontal line of the nature of water and the diagonal line is of the nature of air.

This identification is both interesting and revealing. It brings out the basic approach of realizing the unity between the elements (*bhūtas*) and human creation.

In architecture, the relationship with *adhyātma* is established through the concept of *Vāstu-Puruṣa* (cf. SāṃSū XII.21–37). The architectural structure is described therein in terms of the limbs of the human body, beginning with the face and ending with the feet. *Adhidaivata* is reflected in the assignment of deities to the limbs of this *Vāstu-Puruṣa* (SāṃSū XIV.2–30, alnogwith a detailed explanation) –

Limbs	**Deities**
śiras (head)	Agni (Śiva)
dṛṣṭi (eyes)	Diti and Indra
karṇau (ears)	Jayanta (Kaśyapa) and Aditi
mukha (mouth)	Vāyu
right upper arm	Arka or Sun
left upper arm	Candra or Moon
chest	Mahendra and Caraka
right breast	Aryaman
left breast	Śeṣa
right forearm	Satya (Dharma), Bhṛśa (Kāma), Nabhasa, Vāyu, Pūṣan (Mātṛgaṇa, *antarikṣa*)
left forearm	Yakṣma (roga), Mukhyanāga, Bhallāṭa
hands	Sāvitrī, Savitā, Rudra, Śaktidhara
hṛdaya (heart)	Brahmā
udara (abdomen)	Mitra, Vivasvān

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meḍhra (penis)	Indra and Jaya
right thigh	Yama
left thigh	Varuṇa
jaṇghā (calves)	Gandharva (Nārada) and Bhṛṅga (son of Nirṛti, a demon)
feet	Manes

Thus, the *adhibhūta* (material) of architecture is related to *adhyātma* (interior) and *adhidaivata* transcendent.

Process

Although the concepts of *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma* are present in early Vedic literatue, they are fully developed in the Upaniṣads and the rituals of the Brāhmaṇas. The descriptions in the diverse texts allude to the fact that all worlds and all beings are divided in different types of creations on the basis of the three categories of *adhibhūta*, *adhidaiva* and *adhyātma*. The basic purpose of all these descriptions is to discover the relationship through the denoted meaning of these concepts individually and collectively, with the Supreme Reality. For instance, the meaning of *adhibhūta* as the *Virāṭa-puruṣa* the world-body is regarded as an aggregate of all elemental bodies. In the same way, although the term *adhidaiva* also denotes all that which belongs to the deities and the divine powers, but the final indication is towards the Supreme Deity – the cause of the material creation. The meaning of *adhyātma* as an individual self developes into Universal Self to mark the relationship between the Supreme Soul and the individual soul. Collectively these terms represent a concept that reveals the physical, psychological and the metaphysical states of the Supreme Reality at the three levels of understanding i.e. the outer, the inner and the transcendent.

Conclusion

Thus we have seen that the intimate relationship between the inner and the outer, the micro and the macro, the tangible and the intangible has percolated through all levels of Indian thought – philosophy, spiritual culture (*sādhanā*), ritual, artistic pursuits, etc.

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STHŪLA-SŪKṢMA-PARA

Overview

The terms *sthūla* (n.), *sūkṣma* (n.) and *para* (n.) (gross, subtle and beyond) are interrelated and can be explained at multiple levels. These terms permeate Indian speculative thought and they are the principles governing many aspects of the Indian arts. *Sūkṣma*, the subtle, is considered to be the source from which the gross has emerged, but *para* exists, in the background as a link. The material world consisting of dull matter, according to some doctrines, finally goes to rest in *sūkṣma* atoms (*aṇu*) but others think that this material world is the manifestation of the dynamic energy '*śakti*', nature '*prakṛti*' and the primal sound '*nāda*'. When we look at them with an enquiring eye we do not fail to discern that behind the perceptible grossness of objects there flows, so to say, the undercurrent of subtlety threading through all of them. At the objective level, what appears as *sthūla* transforms itself into *sūkṣma* or in other words, the object of knowledge (*meya*) because of being known, goes back to the instrument of knowledge (*māna*) and lastly both *meya* and →*māna* go to rest in the knowing subject (*mātṛ*). Thus it is clear that on these three levels the *sthūla* aspect remains predominantly present in the objective view, but *sūkṣma* and the comparatively more subtle *para* aspects remain in the background of each. For example, the audible sound and sweetness of music may be considered as examples of *sthūla* and *sūkṣma*, while *para* permeates the two levels of the concept, i.e., *sthūla* and *śūkṣma*. Similarly in architecture the physical body of a temple is the *sthūla* aspect, the perception of the supreme being pervading in, is the *sūkṣma*, and the *para* is the Supreme Being, the encompassing entity.

Etymology and Related Words

The words *sūkṣma* and *sthūla* are adjectives. While the former is derived from the root *sūc-* meaning 'to indicate' with the suffix '*sman*', the latter is derived from the root *sthūl-* indicating that which helps to thicken, that makes stout, massive, bulky, big and large, with the suffix '*ac*'.

The term *para* is derived from the root *pṛ-* meaning *pālana* and *pūraṇa*, 'to protect and nourish', while the root *pṛ-* also means to fill (*pṛ pūraṇe*). The terms *para*, *parva* 'sacred occasion' (*parva pūraṇe*) and *pūrṇa* 'the full', 'perfect' though are derived from the same root, viz. *pṛ-* yet conveying different meanings.

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The sacred occasion (*parva*) helps the aspirants attain the fullness of one's own consciousness which is nothing else than the highest reality – *para* (*svasaṃvit pūrṇatālābhasamayaḥ parva bhaṇyate* – TĀl XXVIII.16cd).

Some compounds with the term *para* are: *para-tattva* 'Supreme Reality', *para-puruṣa* 'the Supreme Spirit', *para-ātman, para-brahman* 'the Supreme Brahman', etc.

The synonyms of *sthūla* are *pīna, pīva* and *pīvara*, while of *sūkṣma* are *leśa* 'very little', signifying littleness of space, *ślakṣṇa* 'minute', *lava* 'a very small time unit', etc. In the **Amara Kośa** the synonyms of *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* have been given thus:

.....पीनपीन्वी न स्थूलपीवरे ।
स्तोकाल्पक्षुल्लकाः श्लक्ष्णं सूक्ष्मं दभ्रं कृशं तनु ॥
स्त्रियां मात्रा त्रुटिः पुंसि लवलेशकणाणवः ।

AmKo III.1.61–62ab

Pīna, pīva, sthūla and *pīvara* signify gross (*sthūla*), while the synonyms of *sūkṣma* are *stoka, alpa, kṣullaka, ślakṣṇa, sūkṣma, dabhra, kṛśa, tanu* (eight in neuter), *mātrā, truṭi* (two in feminine), *lava, leśa, kaṇa* and *aṇu* (four in masculine).

Some compounds with *sūkṣma* are *sūkṣmadarśin* 'sharp-sighted', *sūkṣma-dharma* 'a subtle law or duty', *sūkṣma-nābha* 'name of Viṣṇu', *sūkṣma-māna* 'minute measurement', *sūkṣma-deha* 'the subtle body', *sūkṣma-bhūta* 'a subtle element'.

Sthūla or gross is related with the word *sthūra* (ṚV VI.19.10). It means *upacitāvayava*, increased or a well-developed body.

It also means *paribṛṃhaṇa* 'making bulky'. The **Amara Kośa** says:

... स्थूलं जडेऽपि च ॥

AmKo III.3.204

The word *sthūla* as an adjective means stupid and also bulky.

Compounds with *sthūla* are *sthūladhī* 'dull-witted', *sthūla-śarīra* 'the material body', *sthūla-kāya* 'large bodied', etc. In the **Aṣṭādhyāyī** we find a number of compounds as components with the term *sthūla*, e.g. *sthūlaka* 'large' (Pā V.4.3). A few important words are as follows: *sthūla-nāsika* 'large-nosed' (Pā V.4.118), *sthūla-mukha* 'thick mouthed' (Pā VI.2.168), *sthūla-kakud* 'large-humped' (Pā V.4.146), etc.

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Layers of Meaning

The concept of *sthūla-sūkṣma-para* has various meanings. In the Vedas, though the terms *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* are absent yet, the notion is present there in different names signifying the same concept. In most cases in the Vedic literature *sthūla, sthūra, sthaviṣṭha* and *aṇiṣṭha* are used to denote tangible objects, i.e. the gross or the small. Very rarely, *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* stand as attributes of the intellect as we find them used in classical literature (*sthūladṛk, sūkṣmadṛk*). *Sūkṣma* denotes a subtle body or the current that runs along the blood vessels to mean *sūkṣma-srotas*. The meaning indicated by the gestures and by the arrangement of fingers is also *sūkṣma*. But *para*, 'the beyond', though remaining beyond, is always replenishing the visual and tangible world.

The **Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad** presents the core meaning of the term *para* as that higher knowledge which exceeds all branches of customary knowledge:

> तत्रापरा ऋग्वेदो यजुर्वेदः सामवेदोऽथर्ववेदः शिक्षा कल्पो व्याकरणं निरुक्तं छन्दो ज्योतिषमिति । अथ परा यया तदक्षरमधिगम्यते ॥
>
> MuṇḍUp I.5
>
> The Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda and the six branches of the science of knowledge, i.e. *śikṣā, kalpa, vyākaraṇa, nirukta, chandas* and *jyotiṣa* – these are all customary. The higher knowledge is that through which that imperishable entity is known.

Development of the Concept

The concept of *sthūla* and *sūkṣma*, gross and subtle have developed from a single source known as *para*, the beyond, all-permeating and all embracing entity. This is to be known as evolution or unfoldment while, the process known as enfoldment can be conceived only by one who is keen-sighted.

Para, to mean the beyond, the transcendent is very rarely found in the Saṃhitās, whereas in the Upaniṣads it is used in two different senses. The one means the beyond and the other is used to denote spatial distance. In the sense of distance and beyond the following citations are noteworthy:

> पृच्छामि त्वा परमन्तं पृथिव्याः पृच्छामि यत्र भुवनस्य नाभिः ।
> इयं वेदिः परो अन्तः पृथिव्या अयं यज्ञो भुवनस्य नाभिः ।
>
> ṚV I.164.34ab, 35ab (cf. YV XXIII.62ab)

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I ask you about the furthest limit of earth;
Where, I ask, is the centre of the world?
The altar is the furthest limit of earth;
this sacrifice of ours is the world's center; ... (Tr. R. Panikkar)

The Supreme Deity known as *vāc* is the One who towers above, yet clasps everything within Her splendour.

अहमेव वात इव प्र वाम्यारभमाणा भुवनानि विश्वा ।
परो दिवा पर एना पृथिव्यैतावती महिना सं बभूव ॥

ṚV X.125.8

I breathe out strongly like the wind while clasping
unto myself all worlds, all things that are.
I tower above the earth, above the heavens,
so mighty am I in my power and splendor ! (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Sthūla and *sūkṣma* have been referred to in the Vedas by different terms denoting the same meaning as denoted by *sthūla* in the classical Sanskrit. For example *sthaviṣṭha* and *sthūra* have been presented to mean the coarsest, and gross. The prayer that the Vedic seer utters to Indra is for the bestowal of some tangible, and lasting riches:

नृवत् त इन्द्र नृतमाभिरूती वंसीमहि वामं श्रोमतेभिः ।
ईक्षे हि वस्व उभयस्य राजन् धा रत्नं महि स्थूरं बृहन्तम् ॥

ṚV VI.19.10

With most heroic aid from thee, like heroes, Indra, may
we win wealth by deeds of glory.
Thou, King, art Lord of earthly, heavenly treasure:
vouchsafe us riches vast, sublime and lasting. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

In the following citation we find that the seer offers cakes of two kinds, the one to be offered to Indra is the coarsest and the finest one (*aṇiṣṭhā*) is to be offered to Viṣṇu:

ये स्थविष्ठास्तानिन्द्राय प्रदात्रे दधंश्चरुं येऽणिष्ठास्तान्विष्णवे शिपिविष्टाय ... ।

TSam II.5.5.2

The cakes (*puroḍāśa*) which are largest, are to be offered to Indra, the bestower, while holding the cooked food, that which are the smallest, are to be offered to Viṣṇu, pervaded by rays.

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In the Upaniṣads we find the meaning of both the terms, i.e. *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* have undergone conceptual development. Upaniṣads say that →*Puruṣa* or →*ātman* is so subtle and deeply hidden that without the grasp of the sharpness of intellect (*sūkṣmā buddhi*) it remains beyond perception:

एष सर्वेषु भूतेषु गूढोऽऽत्मा न प्रकाशते ।
दृश्यते त्वग्र्यया बुद्ध्या सूक्ष्मया सूक्ष्मदर्शिभिः ।

KaṭhUp III.12

Though He (the Supreme person) is hidden in all things,
That Soul (Ātman, Self) shines not forth.
But he is seen by subtle seers
With superior, subtle intellect. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The embodied soul imposes upon oneself various garbs gross or subtle, in accordance with its inclination:

स्थूलानि सूक्ष्माणि बहूनि चैव रूपाणि देही स्वगुणैर्वृणोति ।

ŚvUp V.12ab

Coarse and fine, many in number,
The embodied one chooses forms according to his own qualities.
(Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Chāndogya Upaniṣad** presents an analytical vision of the seers when they see objects as possessing threefold characteristics. Where the object is consumed some are rejected, some enrich the body and the mind. The grossest of all transform as feces, urine but heat when eaten though gross is not rejected from the body but becomes bone:

अन्नमशितं त्रेधा विधीयते । तस्य यः स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तत् पुरीषं भवति ।
यो मध्यमस्तन्मांसम् । योऽणिष्ठस्तन्मनः ॥
आपः पीतास्त्रेधा विधीयन्ते । तासां यः स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तन्मूत्रं भवति ।
योमध्यमस्तल्लोहितम् । योऽणिष्ठः सः प्राणः ॥
तेजोऽशितं त्रेधा विधीयते । तस्य यः स्थविष्ठो धातुस्तदस्थि भवति । यो
मध्यमः स मज्जा । योऽणिष्ठः सा वाक् ॥

ChUp VI.5.1–3

Food, when eaten, becomes divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest constituent, becomes the feces; that which is medium, the flesh; that which is finest, the mind.

Water, when drunk, becomes divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest constituent, becomes the urine; that which is medium, the blood; that which is finest, becomes the breath (*prāṇa*).

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Heat, when eaten, becomes divided into three parts. That which is its coarsest constituent, becomes bone; that which is medium, the marrow; that which is finest, the voice. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The Upaniṣads throw enough light on various dimensions of *para*, sometimes denoting the transcendent, the beyond and sometimes hint at comparative distinctions of superiority of space, time and conceptual excellence:

इन्द्रियेभ्यः परा ह्यर्था अर्थेभ्यश्च परं मनः ।
मनसस्तु परा बुद्धिर्बुद्धेरात्मा महान् परः ॥

KaṭhUp III.10

Higher than the senses are the objects of sense.
Higher than the objects of sense is the mind (*manas*);
And higher than the mind is the intellect (*buddhi*).
Higher than the intellect is the Great Self (*Ātman*). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

Further:

महतः परमव्यक्तमव्यक्तात् पुरुषः परः ।
पुरुषान्न परं किञ्चित् सा काष्ठा सा परा गतिः ॥

KaṭhUp III.11

Higher than the Great is the Unmanifest (*avyakta*).
Higher than the Unmanifest is the Person.
Higher than the Person there is nothing at all.
That is the goal. That is the highest course. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** offers a very distinct glimpse of the term *para* in the following citation:

वायुना वै गौतम सूत्रेणायं च लोकः परश्च लोकः सर्वाणि च भूतानि संदृब्धानि भवन्ति ।

BṛUp III.7.2

By wind, verily, O Gautama, as by a thread, this world and the other world and all things are tied together. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The following citation refers to the Supreme, the highest light, the realm of peace.

एवमेवैष संप्रसादोऽस्माच्छरीरात् समुत्थाय परं ज्योतिरुपसंपद्य स्वेन रूपेणाभिनिष्पद्यते ।

ChUp VIII.12.3

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Even so that serene one (*samprasāda*), when he rises up from this body (*śarīra*) and reaches the highest light, appears with his own form. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

All sorts of audible sounds have in their background the air, though very subtle, functions inside the body and being thrusted upward by the vital energy, reaches the throat, the mouth and different walls of the mouth. But before becoming a discernible or perceptible sound the most important factors that help it to become manifest is →*ātman*, the limited self and the mind, the intellect. But the impelling force of the air being struck against the walls of the lungs (*uras*) creates subtle tones (*mandraṃ svaram*). The following passage is relevant:

आत्मा बुद्ध्या समेत्यार्थान् मनो युङ्क्ते विवक्षया ।
मनः कायाग्निमाहन्ति स प्रेरयति मारुतम् ॥
मारुतस्तूरसि चरन् मन्द्रं जनयति स्वरम् ।

PāŚik 6–7ab

The limited self with its discerning intellect considers the appropriateness of objects and then assigns the mind for the purpose of uttering it. The mind then strikes the fire functioning inside the body. Then the fire impels the air, while the air moving in the lungs create subtle tones.

Here, in the above citation we see that all the factors that are engaged in the above operation are subtle entities, i.e. *ātman*, *buddhi*, *manas* and *kāyāgni*, the fire functioning inside the body.

Bhagavad-Gītā

In the **Bhagavad-Gītā** the concept of three inter-connected terms *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *para* has been dealt with while keeping in view subjective and objective aspects respectively. On the subjective plane the nature of knowledge manifests in eight different ways, i.e. earth, water, fire, air, ether, mind, intellect and consciousness of ego that could also be termed as the gross form of nature, these are the constituents of the inferior nature of knowledge. But the cosmic existence of the *ātman* in entirety is superior nature of knowledge that is worth knowing:

अपरेयमितस्त्वन्यां प्रकृतिं विद्धि मे पराम् ।
जीवभूतां महाबाहो ययेदं धार्यते जगत् ॥

BhG VII.5

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This (the eightfold) *prakṛti* (nature) is of a lower type. Different from this is that *Prakṛti* (nature) which holds up the universe and which is life force. Know that that nature of Mine which is my *ātmasvarūpa* is greater. (Tr. A. Kuppuswami)

The two levels of manifestation of knowledge, i.e. gross and subtle, described in the Gītā as inferior and superior, it is said that these are the sources of all beings, but there is only one cause behind all these sources:

एतद्योनीति भूतानि सर्वाणीत्युपधारय ।
अहं कृत्स्नस्य जगतः प्रभवः प्रलयस्तथा ॥

BhG VII.6

Know that all beings have their origin in these two *prakṛti*s (nature) and that through these two I am the cause for the origin and dissolution of the entire universe. (Tr. A. Kuppuswami)

That single cause of the whole creation is the greatest of all (*parataram*):

मत्तः परतरं नान्यत्किञ्चिदस्ति धनञ्जय ।
मयि सर्वमिदं प्रोतं सूत्रे मणिगणा इव ॥

BhG VII.7

O Arjuna! There is nothing greater than I. All this (the whole universe) is clunging to Me even as rows of gems are strung in a piece of cord. (Tr. A. Kuppuswami)

Since that *paramapuruṣa* cannot be assigned any definite form, the meditation of the characteristics of the Supreme is enunciated thus:

कविं पुराणमनुशासितारमणोरणीयांसमनु स्मरेद्यः ।
सर्वस्य धातारमचिन्त्यरूपमादित्यवर्णं तमसः परस्तात् ॥
प्रयाणकाले मनसाऽचलेन भक्त्या युक्तो योगबलेन चैव ।
भ्रुवोर्मध्ये प्राणमावेश्य सम्यक् स तं परं पुरुषमुपैति दिव्यम् ॥

BhG VIII.9–10

He who with steady unwavering mind, with devotion and with the strength of meditation, fixes his breathing (*prāṇa*) in the middle of the eye-brows in the last moments of his life, who incessantly thinks and meditates upon the All-knowing, the most Ancient, the Ruler of all destinies, the atom of atoms, the Protector of the universe of the unimaginable form, brilliant like the Sun, the one who is above *Māyā* (illusion), that *Paramapuruṣa* (the Supreme Brahman) – he reaches that effulgent Supreme Being. (Tr. A. Kuppuswami)

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On the objective plane description of the Supreme knowledge encompassing the gross, subtle and transcendent has been given as under:

बहिरन्तश्च भूतानामचरं चरमेव च ।
सूक्ष्मत्वात्तदविज्ञेयं दूरस्थं चान्तिके च तत् ॥
अविभक्तं च भूतेषु विभक्तमिव च स्थितम् ।
भूतभर्तृ च तज्ज्ञेयं ग्रसिष्णु प्रभविष्णु च ॥
ज्योतिषामपि तज्ज्योतिस्तमसः परमुच्यते ।
ज्ञानं ज्ञेयं ज्ञानगम्यं हृदि सर्वस्य धिष्ठितम् ॥

BhG XIII.15–17

That object worthy of knowing is Brahman. It is described as follows – It is manifest as the respective object of the senses, or as brightening all the senses, the faculties thereof and the objects of the senses. It is not present in all the senses, not attached to anything, but at the same time it is the fundamental base of everything. It is bereft of such characteristics such as *sattva* etc. but preserving those characteristics. It is present inside and outside all moving and static objects. Since it is static and moving and shapeless, it is not possible to be known by the senses, being distant to the ignorant and near unto those having true knowledge. Though, it is not capable of being classified as moving or static, It has the appearance of being classified or separated. It is described as protecting the elements (*bhūtas*), as devouring and as originating everything. Further It is the giver of light to the Sun and the Moon. It is away from ignorance, is the embodiment of knowledge, is fit to be known only by true knowledge (*jñāna*) and is residing (specially) in the hearts of all beings. (Tr. A. Kuppuswami)

Manu Smṛti

Manu states that the subtle dust seen floating in the rays of the sun coming through any narrow opening of the window is known as the triad (*trasareṇu*).

जालान्तरगते भानौ यत्सूक्ष्मं दृश्यते रजः ।
प्रथमं तत्प्रमाणानां त्रसरेणुं प्रचक्षते ॥

Manu VIII.132

In the rays of the sun coming through the lattice window the minute particle of the dust the first visible object, is called (*trasareṇu*) triad.

But Manu stresses that *sūkṣma* is the beyond, that is indiscernible, eternal and all-abiding Lord.

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योऽसावतीन्द्रियग्राह्यः सूक्ष्मोऽव्यक्तः सनातनः ।
सर्वभूतमयोऽचिन्त्यः स एव स्वयमुद्बभौ ॥

Manu I.7

He who can be perceived by the internal organ (alone), who is subtile, indiscernible, and eternal, who contains all created beings and is inconceivable, shone forth of his own (will). (Tr. G. Bühler)

Grammar

→*Śabda* 'sound' in the form of speech is of two types, the one is gross and the other subtle. Bhartṛhari in his **Vākyapadīya** describes the subtle speech thus:

अजस्रवृत्तिर्यः शब्दः सूक्ष्मत्वान्नोपलभ्यते ।
व्यजनाद्वायुरिव स स्वनिमित्तात् प्रतीयते ॥

Vāk I.108/116

Sound though it is ever-disposed to act is not experienced because of subtlety. It is realized through the appropriate causal factors just as air through fanning.

Scholars belonging to Siddhānta Śaiva school are of the opinion that the highest or the supreme speech is known to them as *sūkṣmā*, but without going into the detail of its reality it seems proper to state the nature of speech in its highest dimension.

सूक्ष्मामर्थेनाप्रविभक्ततत्त्वामेकां वाचमनभिष्यन्दमानाम् ।

Svopajñavṛtti on Vāk I.1

The subtle speech which is inseparably associated with *artha* (meaning) object is the single reality. It does not manifest itself (in that state).

This refers to speech which transcends every layer of speech while remaining distinct from each of them. This is known as *parāvāk*, the supreme speech.

Apart from the unitary view of speech and its development as the world (*vivarta*) it can be conceived with dualistic view (*dvaitamadhikṛtya*). Hence, Harivṛṣabha in his commentary quotes a line from an unknown source to show that the world can be classified under two groups.

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नित्याश्चानित्याश्च मात्रायोनयः, यासु रूपि चारूपि च, सूक्ष्मं च स्थूलं चेदं भुवनं विषक्तम् ।

Quoted in Svopajñavṛtti on Vāk I.8

There are eternal and non-eternal entities. The latter of which are the sources to measured out (objects). Among them some are with form and some without any form, some are subtle and some gross. Thus the world is fashioned.

Under the eternal entities →*ātman*, the self and others are counted. Other elements both gross and subtle like the earth which fashions and puts limitations by measuring out objects, are thought to be the cause (source) of jars and other objects of the world. Some have the property of colour and form (*rūpi*) which help the perceiver to see and touch it. These are the gross forms of the world but that which is beyond perception is subtle (*sūkṣma*). Under the class of *sūkṣma* (subtle) mental faculties such as →*buddhi* and others are included.

Though perception is considered to be the principal means for the ascertainment of the existence of an object, the levels of perceptual vision vary by practice. So Bhartṛhari says in the **Vākyapadīya**:

परेषामसमाख्येयमभ्यासादेव जायते ।
मणिरूप्यादिविज्ञानं तद्विदां नानुमानिकम् ॥

Vāk I.35

Such a knowledge as discriminates between different diamonds, different coins, etc. a knowledge which cannot be described to others, arises in those who possess it, only from practice, it is not inferential. (Tr. K. Raghavan Pillai)

Perfection in knowledge can only be earned by practice. Mere perception is of no value. Perception indeed is of some help, but for the right understanding of the objects perceived it should be seen, examined and tasted by different sense organs, which at the time of their accumulation (*samāhāra*) offer perfection in knowledge. Thus perception of gross nature leads to subtlety of perception. The gross perception is only the rudiment but the subtle perception is the developed one which can be earned only through the continued contemplation. It is so subtle that its nature cannot be explained to others. The refinement of such knowledge when attains its highest perfection one is able to relish the subtlety of music, poetry and dance and so on. Therefore Vṛṣabhadeva comments on the above thus:

न हि रूपतर्कादयः सूक्ष्मानप्रसिद्धसंविज्ञानपदान् कार्षापणादीनां कल्पयित्वापि समधिगमहेतून् परेभ्य आख्यातुं शक्नुवन्ति । षड्ज

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ऋषभगान्धारधैवतादिभेदं वा प्रत्यक्षप्रमाणविषयमप्यभ्यासमन्तरेणाभियुक्ताः प्रणिधानवन्तोऽपि न प्रतिपद्यन्ते ।

Svopajñavṛtti on Vāk I.35

It is quite impossible to describe to others by the goldsmith or jeweller who is expert in the ascertainment of the nature of coins or jewels what the cause of his expert knowledge is. It is exceedingly subtle insight which has developed in him without any known source. If it is supposed that such a knowledge has descended orally from the teacher to the student even then it cannot be conveyed to others. Different musical notes like *ṣaḍja, ṛṣabha, gāndhāra*, and *dhaivata* though they come under perceptive knowledge, even then versed scholars applying their whole attention to the music are not able to understand it properly.

The above citation sufficiently attests to the view that subtlety of knowledge either is an inborn capacity or can be earned through practice.

Āyurveda

Caraka enumerates some properties of the body which are gross, heavy or light.

तत्रेमे शरीरधातुगुणाः संख्यासामर्थ्यकराः; तद्यथा – गुरुलघुशीतोष्ण स्निग्धरूक्षमन्दतीक्ष्णस्थिरसरमृदुकठिनविशदपिच्छिलश्लक्ष्णखरसूक्ष्मस्थूल-सान्द्रद्रवाः ... ।

CarSamŚāSthā VI.10

These are the properties of the body constituents which can be enumerated such as – heaviness-lightness, coldness-hotness, unctuousness-roughness, dullness-sharpness, stability-mobility, softness-hardness, non-sliminess-sliminess, smoothness-coarseness, minuteness-grossness, solidity-liquidity. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Among the above properties of the body some are gross and some subtle.

The author speaks of properties which belong to wind:

लघुशीतरूक्षखरविशदसूक्ष्मस्पर्शगुणबहुलानि वायव्यानि ।

CarSamSūSthā XXVI.11

The properties which are light, cold, rough, coarse, non-slimy, minute and predominantly possessing the property of touch are born of air.

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Cakrapāṇi, the commentator of the **Caraka Saṃhitā**, defines *sūkṣma* thus:

सूक्ष्मं सूक्ष्मस्रोतोऽनुसारि ।

CarSamSūSthā XXVI.11

Sūkṣma means that moves along the minute channels.
(Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Suśruta defines *sūkṣma* thus:

सूक्ष्मस्तु सौक्ष्म्यात् सूक्ष्मेषु स्रोतःस्वनुसरः स्मृतः ॥

SuSamSūSthā XLVI.524cd

Subtlety is the quality by virtue of which it is able to move along narrow capillaries and channels of the body.

The Philosophic Schools: Darśana

According to Sāṃkhya doctrine the elements are classified under two categories, some of them are *viśeṣa*s and others are *aviśeṣa*s. The *aviśeṣa*s are cause of great elements which are gross. While their subtle *tanmātra*s are called *aviśeṣa*s, only because they do not have the characteristics of being tranquil (*śānta*), restless (*ghora*), or dull (*mūḍha*). While those termed as *viśeṣa*s do possess the above characters. The great elements born of the subtile elements are experienced as distinct from one another. Vācaspatimiśra while commenting on the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (38) of Īśvarakṛṣṇa, states:

यस्मादाकाशादिषु स्थूलेषु सत्त्वप्रधानतया केचिच्छान्ताः सुखाः प्रकाशा लघवः, केचिद्रजःप्रधानतया घोरा दुःखा अनवस्थिताः, केचित्तमः प्रधानतया मूढा विषण्णा गुरवः । तेऽमी परस्परव्यावृत्त्याऽनुभूयमाना विशेषा इति च स्थूला इति चोच्यन्ते । तन्मात्राणि त्वस्मदादिभिः परस्परव्यावृत्तानि नानुभूयन्ते, इत्यविशेषा इति सूक्ष्मा इति चोच्यन्ते ।

SāṃTaKau 38

As in the gross elements beginning with the ether and so on, some are tranquil, pleasing, shining, light because of *sattva* (intelligibility) being predominant in them and because of the predominance of action some are *ghora* dreadful, painful, restless and because of the predominance of inertia, some are dull, morbid and heavy. As they are experienced mutually distinct from one another, they are called *viśeṣa*, specific, and gross. But the subtle elements are not experienced by us as mutually distinct from one another. Therefore they are called non-specific and subtle.

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The *viśeṣa*s which are experienced as gross have their subdivisions. The living body composed of six *kośa*s, viz. hair, blood, flesh, sinews, bones and marrow is born of parents. They all come under the gross body.

In the above context the commentator hints that by the term *mahābhūta*, the great elements are referred, while matters like the jar and so on should be considered as *bhūta* – elements.

With reference to the body it is stated to be of two kinds – gross and subtle. Īśvarakṛṣṇa in his **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** states:

सूक्ष्मा मातापितृजाः सह प्रभूतैस्त्रिधा विशेषाः स्युः ।
सूक्ष्मास्तेषां नियता मातापितृजा निवर्तन्ते ॥

SāṃKā 39

The *viśeṣa*s have three varieties: (i) the subtle bodies (having *prāṇa* and seven other entities as component parts and endowed with volition), (ii) the bodies born of parents, (iii) mixed form of the five *bhūta*s. Of these the subtle bodies are constant (i.e. existing from creation to the end of dissolution), while the body born of parents ceases to last. (Tr. R. S. Bhattacharya)

The **Yuktidīpikā** (a comm. on ŚāṃKā) states that *sūkṣma*, very subtle fire, though cannot be perceptible, causes subtle illumination. It also states that only the subtle entities give birth to tangible forms.

सूक्ष्मोऽग्निः सूक्ष्मं प्रकाशं स्वयमेव करोति, घटादिप्रकाशने तु तैलवर्त्त्यादयपेक्षते ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 15

Subtle fire itself creates subtle illumination, but it takes the help of oil, wick and so on while illuminating jars and the like.
(Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

सूक्ष्माणां मूर्तिलाभः कार्यम् ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 3

An effect is nothing but the assuming of a *mūrti* (form) by the subtle entities (which are its causes). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

The **Yoga-Sūtra** of Patañjali in one of the aphorisms states:

सूक्ष्मविषयत्वं चालिङ्गपर्यवसानम् ॥

YSū I.45

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The subtile object likewise terminates in unresoluble-primary-matter (*aliṅga*). (Tr. J.H. Woods)

Vyāsa in his commentary deals with the matter in the wider perspective by stating that the subtle object down from the earth terminating in the primordial matter, has gradual subtlety in their respective spheres of objectivity.

पार्थिवस्याणोर्गन्धतन्मात्रं सूक्ष्मो विषयः । आप्यस्य रसतन्मात्रम् । तैजसस्य रूपतन्मात्रम् । वायवीयस्य स्पर्शतन्मात्रम् । आकाशस्य शब्दतन्मात्रमिति । तेषामहंकारः । अस्यापि लिङ्गमात्रं सूक्ष्मो विषयः । लिङ्गमात्रस्याप्यलिङ्गं सूक्ष्मो विषयः । न चालिङ्गात्परं सूक्ष्ममस्ति ।

YSūBh I.45

In the case of the earthen-atom the fine element of odour, is the subtile object of the balanced states; in the case of the watery atom, the fine element of taste (is the subtile object); in case of the fiery atom the fine element of colour; in case of the windy atom the fine element of touch; in case of the etheral atom the fine element of sound. The personality-substance which is the cause of these (is the subtile object). Resoluble-primary-matter-as-such (which is the cause) of this (personality-substance) also is the subtile object (of the balanced-state) . Unresoluble-primary-matter which is the cause of this (resoluble-primary-matter-as-such) also is the subtile object (of the balanced-state). And beyond the unresoluble-primary-matter there is nothing subtile. (Based on the tr. by J.H. Woods)

The subtle body is said to have been produced by *Pradhāna* at the time of the first creation (*pūrvotpannam*). The bodies created for each individual soul consist of eighteen constituents, viz. *mahat, ahaṃkāra*, eleven sense-organs and five subtle elements (cf. SāṃSū III.9). Thus this body is the aggregate of all the aforesaid constituents where latent ideas (*bhāvairadhivāsitam*) are closely abiding there. On account of the presence of *bhāvas* in the intellect which being inseparably associated with the subtle body, passes through the cycle of birth and death. During the great dissolution, this body dissolves in its source, therefore it is called *liṅga śarīra*. The gross body, (born of parents) ceases when it dies and goes either to the earth or water or to ashes.

The **Yoga-Sūtra** has described subjugation of the elements in the following way:

स्थूलस्वरूपसूक्ष्मान्वयार्थवत्त्वसंयमाद् भूतजयः ॥

YSū III.44

As a result of constraint upon the coarse (*sthūla*) and the essential

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attribute (*svarūpa*) and the subtile (*sūkṣma*) and the inherence (*anvaya*) and the purposiveness (*arthavattva*), there is a subjugation of the elements. (Tr. J.H. Woods)

It is clear from the above that elements possesing varied nature, the gross and the subtle occupy a predominant position. The commentary of Vyāsa defines the term *sthūla* thus:

तत्र पार्थिवाद्याः शब्दादयो विशेषाः सहाकारादिभिर्धर्मैः स्थूलशब्देन परिभाषिताः ।

YSūBh III.44

The (five elements) beginning with earth (which in essence are a generic form and a particular) have (as particulars) sounds and other perceptible things; (these) particulars, together with their properties (*dharma*), shape and the rest (which are to be described), are technically called coarse (*sthūla*). (Tr. J.H. Woods)

The commentary called **Tattvavaiśāradī** of Vācaspatimiśra further elucidates the above:

पार्थिवाः पाथसीयास्तैजसा वायवीया आकाशीयाः शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसगन्धा यथासम्भवं विशेषाः षड्जगान्धारादयः शीतोष्णादयो नीलपीतादयः कषायमधुरादयः सुरभ्यादयः । एते हि नामरूपप्रयोजनैः परस्परतो भिद्यन्त इति विशेषाः । एतेषां पञ्च पृथिव्यां गन्धवर्जं चत्वारोऽप्सु गन्धरसवर्जं त्रयस्तेजसि गन्धरसरूपवर्जं द्वौ नभस्वति शब्द एव आकाशे । त एत ईदृशा विशेषाः सहाकारादिभिर्धर्मैः स्थूलशब्देन परिभाषिताः शास्त्रे ।

TaVai on YSūBh III.44

The sounds and touches and colours and tastes and smells, belonging (respectively) to the earthen and watery and fiery and windy and ethereal (classes or elements), have correspondingly the particulars, such as the first (*ṣaḍja*) or the third notes, or heat or cold, or blue or yellow, or astringent or sweet, or fragrant or other (particular instances). For because these are different from each other in name and form and use, they are the particulars. Of these particulars there are five in earth, four (counting out smell) are in water, three (counting out smell and taste) are in fire, two (counting out smell and taste and colour) are in wind (*nabhasvant*), sound alone is in the air. Particulars such as these, together with their properties (*dharma*), form and the rest, are technically called coarse in (this) system. (Based on the tr. by J.H. Woods)

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All the elements are considered as gross (*sthūla*) and the properties belonging to them are also gross because they are perceived to have particular forms (*viśiṣṭākāravat*) and possess perceptible properties. The substance (→*dravya*) is an aggregate of the generic form and of the particular (*sāmānya viśeṣa samudayo'tra dravyam*). Thus, according to the system of Patañjali, a substance which has the generic form like *mūrti*, limited in extension belongs to the earth, liquidity of water, heat of fire, mobility of air, pervasiveness of ether. Therefore, they are included under the concept of *sthūla*.

While all these *sthūla* forms have a subtle nature of their own the question naturally arises, what is their subtle form? With this question in mind the commentator Vyāsa says:

> अथ किमेषां सूक्ष्मरूपं? तन्मात्रं भूतकारणं, तस्यैकोऽवयवः परमाणुः सामान्यविशेषात्माऽयुतसिद्धावयवभेदानुगतः समुदाय इत्येवं सर्व-तन्मात्राणि... ।
>
> YSūBh III.44
>
> Now what is the subtile form, (of these elements)? (The answer is) it is subtile-substance, the cause of the elements. Of (any) one of these (elements) an atom is one part. Its essence is the generic-form and the particular and it is an aggregate consisting of different parts which cannot exist separately. Similarly with all the *tanmātras*. (Tr. J.H. Woods)

> यथा च परमाणुः सूक्ष्मं रूपमेवं सर्वतन्मात्राणि सूक्ष्मं रूपमिति ।
>
> TaVai on YSū III.44
>
> Just as the atom is a subtile (*sūkṣma*) form, so all the five elements (*tanmātra*) are a subtile form. (Tr. J.H. Woods)

According to Yoga system the three time-forms pass along three paths (*tryadhvāna*). They are manifest, subtle and essentially are of the characteristic of →*guṇas*. The external aspects are nothing but the manifest form (*sthūla*), here termed as →*vyakta* which pass through three time-forms, present, past and future. These two, i.e. the phenomenalized (individuals) or subtile (generic forms) and their essence are the aspects (*guṇa*).

> ते व्यक्तसूक्ष्मा गुणात्मानः ॥
>
> YSū IV.13
>
> These (external-aspects with the three time-forms) are phenomenalized (individuals) or subtile (generic forms and) their essence is the aspects (*guṇa*). (Tr. J.H. Woods)

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The text throws more light on →*vyakta* (manifest, i.e. gross) and *sūkṣma* (subtile):

> ते खल्वमी त्र्यध्वानो धर्मा वर्तमाना व्यक्तात्मानोऽतीतानागताः सूक्ष्मात्मानः... ।
>
> YSūBh IV.13
>
> Of the aspects moving along three paths the manifest one is the present, while the past and future are characterised by subtlety. (Tr. J.H. Woods)

> चित्तं ग्राह्यसमापन्नं ग्राह्यस्वरूपाकारेण निर्भासते । भूतसूक्ष्मोपरक्तं भूतसूक्ष्मसमापन्नं भूतसूक्ष्मस्वरूपाभासं भवति । तथा स्थूलालम्बनोपरक्तं स्थूलरूपसमापन्नं स्थूलरूपाभासं भवति ... ।
>
> YSūBh I.41
>
> The mind stuff is influenced by referring to the object-to-be-known and appears as having the form of the object-to-be-known and comes into a state-of-balance with the object-to-be-known and appears as having the form of the object-to-be-known as it is in itself. Influenced by a subtile element it comes into a state-of-balance with the subtile element and seems to be the subtile element itself. Likewise, influenced by referring to a coarse (element) it comes into a state-of-balance with a coarse form and seems to have a coarse form. (Tr. J. H. Woods)

According to the Vaiśeṣika system the substances like the earth, water, fire and air are gross; while the void, time, space, the soul and the mind are subtle. The group of four, i.e. the earth, water, fire and air is the cause of materials (*dravyārambhaka*) and possess the property of touch. The group of five beginning from the earth and ending in the ether has the characteristic feature of being the element (*bhūtatā*) and is the cause of sense perceptions.

It is clear that the terms *aṇu* and *mahat*, i.e. subtle and large, signify *sūkṣma* and *sthūla* respectively. It is relevant to say that according to Vaiśeṣika doctrine the most subtle is *aṇu*, i.e. the atom and the dyad, while the triad (*tryaṇuka*) onward all the physical bodies are considered large(*mahat*).

If *mahat* is to be taken as one of the synonyms of *sthūla*, then according to the definition given by the Vaiśeṣika thinkers it is as follows:

> यत् परिमाणं रूपसहायं स्वाश्रयं प्रत्यक्षयति तत्र महदिति यच्च न प्रत्यक्षयति तत्राण्वितिव्यवहारः ।
>
> Note on VaiśSū p.55

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The measure which causes the perception of the locus with the help of colour in which it abides is the concept large and that which does not cause such a perception, there the concept atomic (*aṇu*) is used.

The Naiyāyikas accepting the above view add that all the substances from the earth to air have *aṇus*, the atoms, as their constituents. It is very subtle and imperceptible. It is finer than *truṭi*, that is, *trasareṇu*, the composite unity of three pairs of dyads, and even dyads (*dvyaṇuka*) the composite unity of two atoms. Both *paramāṇu* and *dvyaṇuka* are subtle because according to the above doctrine anything to become perceptible, it is essential for it to possess *mahatparimāṇa*, large dimension. From *trasareṇu* onward all the objects possess large dimension and therefore to some extent it may be considered as *mahat*. Possession of greater dimension, does not mean gross, for the ether possesses large dimension but it is not gross, for grossness is the property of the earth, water, fire and air. But *paramāṇu*, the atom, is highly subtle. So Gautama states:

परं वा त्रुटेः ॥

NySū IV.2.17

The highest subtlety beyond *truṭi*, triad and dyad is the atom.

In the same context it is interesting to note how the Vedāntins differentiate the gross and subtle with reference to bodies. The gross body constituted of sheathes (*kośa*), is primarily made of food (*anna*), while the subtle body being the effect of *rajas*, an aspect of *prakṛti*, the primrodial source, is covered with the sheath of the vital air (*prāṇamaya kośa*). It is known as *liṅga* body. Śaṅkara's commentary on the **Brahma-Sūtra** speaks of two kinds of bodies, the one is gross and the other is subtle.

द्विविधं हि शरीरं स्थूलं सूक्ष्मं च । स्थूलं यदिदमुपलभ्यते ... ।

BrSūŚBh I.4.3

There are, (they say), two kinds of body, the gross one and the subtle one. The gross body is the one which is perceived.
(Tr. G. Thibaut)

The *sūtrakāra* describes the subtle body thus:

सूक्ष्मं प्रमाणतश्च तथोपलब्धेः ॥
नोपमर्देनातः ॥

BrSū IV.2.9–10

And (heat is) subtle in measure; as this is thus observed.

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Therefore the subtle body does not undergo pains(like the gross body).

The subtle body, according to Vedānta, is known as *avyakta.*

सूक्ष्मं तु तदर्हत्वात् ॥

BrSū I.4.2

But the subtle body is meant by the term *avyakta* on account of its capability (of being so designated). (Tr. G. Thibaut)

The commentator elucidates the point in the following way:

सूक्ष्मं त्विह कारणात्मना शरीरं विवक्ष्यते सूक्ष्मस्याव्यक्तशब्दार्हत्वात् । यद्यपि स्थूलमिदं शरीरं न स्वयमव्यक्तशब्दमर्हति, तथापि तस्य त्वारम्भकं भूतसूक्ष्ममव्यक्तशब्दमर्हति ।

BrSūŚBh I.4.2

But subtle (body) here will be described as the causal body, because as regards the subtle it is worthy to be named unmanifest (*avyakta*).

Though this gross body is not worthy to be named unmanifest yet the cause, which is subtle elements of it, from which this gross body has emerged, is worthy to be called (*avyakta*).

स्यात्पञ्चीकृतभूतोत्थो देहः स्थूलोऽन्नसंज्ञकः ।
लिङ्गे तु राजसैः प्राणैः प्राणः कर्मेन्द्रियैः सह ॥

Pañcad I.34

The gross body which is the product of the quintuplicated elements is known as the food sheath. That portion of the subtle body, which is composed of the five vital airs and the five organs of action, and which is the effect of the *rajas* aspect of *Prakṛti* is called the vital sheath. (Tr. Swahananda)

Definition of the subtle body called *liṅga śarīra* as stated by Swami Vidyāraṇya is a collection of seventeen subtle entities.

बुद्धिकर्मेन्द्रियप्राणपञ्चकैर्मनसा धिया ।
शरीरं सप्तदशभिः सूक्ष्मं तल्लिङ्गमुच्यते ॥

Pañcad I.23

The five sensory organs, the five organs of action, the five vital airs, mind and intellect, all the seventeen together, form the subtle body, which is called the *sūkṣma* or *liṅga śarīra.* (Tr. Swahananda)

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As regards *para* the **Brahma-Sūtra** conceives God to be the *para*, the Supreme, from whom the agenthood is delegated to the individual self:

परात्तु तच्छ्रुतेः ॥

BrSū II.3.41

But the agentship (of the individual soul) is derived from God, for that is what is stated in the Vedic texts. (Tr. Gambhirananda)

Buddhism

According to Buddhist tradition the terms *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* have been dealt with in accordance to its doctrinal reference. The term *sthūla* is known as *thūla* in Pali which means great, while *sūkṣma* as *sukhuma*, fine. The external world which seems to be made of gross matters remains out of the purview of the Buddhist scholars:

सुखुमपञ्हो :

राजा आह – "भन्ते नागसेन, सक्का सब्बं सुखुमं छिन्दतुं" ति? "आम, महाराज, सक्का सब्बं सुखुमं छिन्दितुं" ति । "किं पन, भन्ते, सब्बं सुखुमं" ति? "धम्मो खो, महाराज, सब्बसुखुमो । न खो, महाराज, धम्मा सब्बे सुखुमा, 'सुखुमं' ति वा 'थूलं' ति वा धम्मानमेतमधिवचनं । यं किंचि छिन्दितब्बं सब्बं तं पञ्ञाय छिन्दति, नत्थि दुतियं पञ्ञाय छेदनं" ति । "कल्लोसि, भन्ते नागसेना" ति ।

MilPañ III.7.14, p.70

Question on *sūkṣma* (subtle):

The king said: 'Can even the most minute thing, Nāgasena, be divided?' Yes, it can. 'And what, Sir, is the most minute (and subtle) of all things.' 'Truth (*Dhamma*), indeed, O king, is minutest of all. But this is not true of all qualities (*Dhammā*). Subtleness or the reverse are epithets of qualities. But whatever can be divided that can wisdom (*paññā*) divide, and there is no other quality which can divide wisdom.'

'Very good, Nāgasena!' (Tr. T.W. Rhys Davids)

But regarding the mind content it is considered to be gross and subtle *Dhamma*, quality is considered to be the most subtle which cannot be divided but *paññā*, wisdom can divide everything.

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Mind is stated to be *udāra*, gross and *sūkṣma*, subtle.

वितर्कचारा वौदार्यसूक्ष्मते ... ।
चित्तौदारिकता वितर्कः । चित्तसूक्ष्मता विचारः ।

AbhidhKoBh II.33ab

Vitarka and *vicāra* are grossness and subtlety of the mind.

The grossness, that is, the gross state of the mind is termed *vitarka*; the subtlety, that is, the subtle state of the mind is termed *vicāra*. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

As regards clouds they are of three types, the one is *thūla* 'thick', the other is *majjhima* 'medium' and the third is *sukhuma* 'fine'.

... अथेको वातो उट्ठहित्वा थूलथूले । वलाहके विद्धंसेसि, अपरो मज्झिमे, अपरो सुखुमे पि । ... तत्थ तयो वलाहका विय सच्चपटिच्छादकं थूल-मज्झिम-सुखुमं किलेसन्धकारं ।

ViMag XXII.8–9

... Then a wind sprang up and blew away the thick clouds; another blew away the medium clouds; and another blew away the fine clouds as well. Herein, the thick, medium and fine kinds of darkness that conceal the truth are like the three kinds of clouds. (Tr. Bhikkhu Ñyāṇamoli)

Sins are viewed to be of two types *aṇu* – subtle and *thūla* – gross by the knowers of *dhamma.*

यो च समेति पापानि, अणुं थूलानि सब्बसो ।
समितत्ता हि पापानं, समणो ति पवुच्चति ॥

DhPad XIX.6 (265)

He who has totally subdued all his sins both crude and subtle (great and small) is called a saint (*samaṇa*) because he has overcome all evils. (Tr. N.C. Panda)

The visible world is viewed as *thāvara* – still, *dīgha* – long, *rassaka* – small, *mahat* – large, *aṇuka* – small, *thūla* – great:

ये केचि पाणभूतत्थि तसा वा थावरा व अनवसेसा ।

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दीघा वा ये महन्ता वा मज्झिमा रस्सकाऽणुकथूला ॥

SutNip 146

Whatever living creatures there are, (moving or still) without exception, whichever are long or large, or middle-sized or short, small or great. (Tr. K.R. Norman)

The world consisting of multifarious nature viewed with non-attachment, only then the person is considered to be a Brāhmaṇa:

योऽच दीघं व रस्सं वा अणुं थूलं सुभासुभं ।
लोके अदिन्नं नादियति तमहं ब्रूमि ब्राह्मणं ॥

SutNip 633

Whoever here does not take what is not given in the world, (be it) long or short, small or large, beautiful or ugly, him I call a brahman. (Tr. K.R. Norman)

The material form is visible only under some conditions. They are enumerated in the following way:

कतमं तं रूपं रूपायतनं? यं रूपं चतुन्नं महाभूतानं उपादाय वण्णनिभा – सनिदस्सनं सप्पटिघं – नीलं पीतकं लोहितकं ओदातं काळकं मञ्जेट्ठकं हरि हरिवण्णं अम्बङ्गुरवण्णं दीघं रस्सं अणुं थूलं वट्टं परिमण्डलं चतुरस्सं छळंसं अट्ठंसं सोळसंसं निन्नं थलं छाया आतपो आलोको अन्धकारो अब्भा महिका धूमो रजो, चन्दमण्डलस्स वण्णनिभा, सुरियमण्डलस्स वण्णनिभा, तारकरूपानं वण्णनिभा, आदासमण्डलस्स वण्णनिभा, मणिसङ्खमुत्तावेळुरियस्स वण्णनिभा, जातरूपरजतस्स वण्णनिभा, यं वा पनञ्ञं पि अत्थि रूपं चतुन्नं महाभूतानं उपादाय वण्णनिभा-सनिदस्सनं सप्पटिघं, यं रूपं सनिदस्सनं सप्पटिघं चक्खुना अनिदस्सनेन सप्पटिघेन पस्सि वा, पस्सति वा, पस्सिस्सति वा, पस्से वा, रूपं पेतं, रूपायतनं पेतं, रूपधातु पेसा, इदं तं रूपं रूपायतनं।

DhSaṅ (rūpakhaṇḍa) 617

What is that (material) form which is the sphere of (visible) shape?

The (material) form which, derived from the great principles, is visible under the appearance of colour and reacting – is blue, yellow, red, white, black, crimson, bronze, green-coloured, of the hue of the mango-bud; is long, short, big, little, circular, oval, square, hexagonal, octagonal, hekkaidecagonal; low, high, shady, glowing, light, dim, dull, frosty, smoky, dusty; like in colour to the disc of moon, sun, stars, a mirror, a gem, a shell, a pearl, a cat's eye, gold or silver; or whatever other shape there is which, derived from the four

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Great Phenomena, is visible and reacting-shape which, visible and reacting, one has seen, sees, will, or may see with the eye that is invisible and reacting – this which is visible shape, this which is the sphere of visible shape, the constituent element of visible shape – this is that form which is the sphere of visible shape.
(Tr. A.F. Rhys Davids)

The form (*rūpa*) here means body. It passes through many existences. It should neither be conceived as identified with consciousness nor as an object to be possessed:

तस्मातिह, भिक्खवे, यं किंचि रूपं अतीतानागतपच्चुप्पन्नं अज्झत्तं वा बहिद्धा वा ओळारिकं वा, सुखुमं वा, हीनं वा, पणीतं वा, यं दूरे वा, सन्तिके वा, सब्बं रूपं – नेतं मम, नेसोहमस्मि न मेसो अत्ता ति – एवमेतं यथाभूतं सम्मप्पञ्ञाय दट्ठब्बं ।

VinPiṭ I.6.44 (I.14)

Therefore, O(monks) Bhikkhus, whatever is embodied past, future, present or internal or external, or gross or subtle, inferior or superior, distant or near, all these forms – none (of these) is mine, is not me, is. not myself. Thus, it should be considered by right knowledge according to the Truth. (Tr. N.C. Panda)

Regarding the subtle nature of material form (*rūpa*) *sukhuma* has been explained in various ways like sense organs and their functions:

कतमं तं रूपं सुखुमं? इत्थिन्द्रियं, पुरिसिन्द्रियं, जीवितिन्द्रियं, कायविञ्ञत्ति, वचीविञ्ञत्ति, आकासधातु, रूपस्स लहुता, रूपस्स मुदुता, रूपस्स कम्मञ्ञता, रूपस्स उपचयो, रूपस्स सन्तति, रूपस्स जरता, रूपस्स अनिच्चता, कबळिङ्कारो आहारो, इदं तं रूपं सुखुमं ।

DhSaṅ 676

Which is that (material) form which is subtle (*sukhumaṃ*)? Woman-faculty, man-faculty, life-faculty; intimation by act, by speech; the element of space; buoyancy of form, plasticity of form, wieldiness of form, integration of form, maintenance of form, decay of form, impermanence of form and bodily nutriment – this is that (material) form which is subtle. (Tr. A.F. Rhys Davids)

The **Aṭṭhasālinī** (comm. of Dhammasaṅgaṇi), holds that the concepts of *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* are relative. So it says:

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थूलं उपनिधाय ततो खुद्दकतरं अणुं, तं उपनिधाय ततो महन्ततरं थूलं ।

Aṭṭh IV, p. 436

With reference to what is big, a thing smaller than that is little (*aṇu*), with referance to which a greater thing is big.
(Tr. Pe. Maung Tin)

According to Tantric Buddhism, *sthūla* and *sūkṣma* have been thought of as *hīna, madhyama* and *nikṛṣṭa.* Therefore, we find the idea in the following citation:

हीनमध्यमोकृष्टान्येवान्यानि यानि तानि च ।
सर्वाण्येतानि समानीति द्रष्टव्यं तत्त्वभावनैः ॥
हीनं सूक्ष्मपदार्थं तु उत्कृष्टं भावमुच्यते ।
मध्यमं वर्जितं द्वाभ्यामन्यानीति षडिन्द्रियम् ॥

HT I.8.37–38

Small and middling and great and whatever other things there are, all these are regarded as equal by those who have realized the truth.

Small means the subtle concept of a thing, and great refers to the thing as existing; middling is neither the one nor the other, and other things refer to the six faculties of sense. (Tr. D.L. Snellgrove)

While commenting upon this verse the commentator Saroruha states: Small means atom, knowledge, etc., great means earth, mountain, ocean, etc., middling means pot, cloth, etc.

Jainism

The Jaina thinkers view the subtle nature of the world as consisting in two-fold ways. The one is real and the other is relative. Therefore it is stated as follows:

सौक्ष्म्यं द्विविधं – अन्त्यमापेक्षिकं च । तत्रान्त्यं परमाणूनाम् । आपेक्षिकं बिल्वामलकबदरादीनाम् ।

SaSi on TaSū V.24

Fineness is of two kinds, extreme and relative. Extreme fineness is found in the indivisible atoms. Instances of relative fineness are the wood-apple (*bilva*), emblic myrobalan, plum, etc. (Tr. S.A. Jain)

Like subtleness, grossness is also of two kinds:

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स्थौल्यमपि द्विविधं - अन्त्यमापेक्षिकं चेति । तत्रान्त्यं जगद्व्यापिनि महास्कन्धे । आपेक्षिकं बदरामलकबिल्वतालादिषु ।

SaSi on TaSū V.24

Similarly, grossness also is of two kinds, extreme and relative. The instance of extreme grossness is the biggest molecule of matter pervading the entire universe. Instances of relative grossness are the plum, myrobalan, wood-apple, palmyra fruit, etc. (Tr. S.A. Jain)

The Jaina thinkers are aware that souls before liberation have bodies of their own. As the souls are embodied they can abide in the same space occupied by other souls. A synonym of *sthūla* is used here as *bādara*. The subtle-bodied souls are so fine that even *bādara*, the gross cannot obstruct them.

At another place there is discussion on how visiblity of an object occurs. Just as the Vaiśeṣika thinkers say that *mahattva* of an object is a factor that helps the eye to see, in the same way the Jaina thinkers say that some objects are non-visible while others are visible. The objects which are non-visible by nature can never be visible while some are considered to become visible when its latent subtleness remains in abeyance and grossness becomes manifest:

सूक्ष्मास्तु सशरीरा अपि सूक्ष्मभावादेवैकनिगोदजीवावगाह्येऽपि प्रदेशे साधारणशरीरा अनन्तानन्ता वसन्ति । न ते परस्परेण बादरैश्च व्याहन्यन्त इति ।

SaSi on TaSū V.15

Even infinite times infinite souls in a subtle state (the lowest category of souls with one sense only) along with their subtle bodies dwell even in the space occupied by a single one-sensed *nigoda jīva*. There is no obstruction among themselves and between them and the gross ones. (Tr. S.A. Jain)

Again:

सौक्ष्म्यपरिणामोपरमे स्थौल्योत्पत्तौ चाक्षुषो भवति ।

SaSi on TaSū V.28

The molecule of minute size gives up its minuteness and attains grossness. Then it becomes visible. (Tr. S.A. Jain)

Sthūla/bādara bodies are those which obstruct the bodies of others:

सूक्ष्मशरीरनिर्वर्तकं सूक्ष्मनाम । अन्यबाधाकरशरीरकारणं बादरनाम... ।

SaSi on TaSū VIII.11

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That produces a subtle body is the *nāma-karma* of subtle bodies. The *bādaranāma* is the cause of bodies which obstruct others.
(Tr. S.A. Jain)

Tantra-Āgama

In Tantra the gross, subtle and the transcendent have been viewed with reference to means (*upāya*) for the removal of misery of the worldly existence. It has been stated in the **Netra Tantra** that the means of getting rid of misery are three, viz. *sthūla*, *sūkṣma* and *para*.

त्रिविधं तदुपायं तु स्थूलं सूक्ष्मं परं च तत् ॥
स्थूलं तु यजनं होमो जपो ध्यानं समुद्रकम् ।
* * *
सूक्ष्मं चक्रादियोगेन कलानाड्युदयेन च ।
परं सर्वात्मकं चैव ... ॥

NT VI.6cd-7ab, 8abc

The means for its attainment is threefold. It is gross, subtle and transcendent. But the gross is the offering to the deity, oblation into the fire, repetition of the *mantra*, meditation (of the deity) along with *mudrās*. But the subtle one is performed with the association of *cakra*s and so on, and by means of getting the minute time units (*kalās*) to rise along the principal channels (inside the body and then they should be impelled to move upward). The transcendent is all pervading.

All the external practices generally followed by the aspirant come under the means known as *sthūlopāyaḥ*. Flowers, food, sandal paste, incense and so on are offered to the deity conceiving the presence of the divine before him, but as soon as aspirant is able to realize that everything that shines externally is nothing but the manifestation of the inner, the gross means become transformed into the subtle. The subtle means is the dynamic energy which functions as centre of consciousness. The *yogin* by attaining control over these tries to get them moved along the channels to reach the summit of the body in order to identify his own consciousness merged into the dynamic pulsation which is thought to be the supreme pulsation (*paramaṃ spandanam*). This is the highest aim of the aspirant. It is attained by means of subtle form of meditation (*sūkṣmadhyānakrameṇa*).

Another way called *yoga* is illustrated further in the same text:

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त्रिविधेन तु योगेन योजयन्ति शिवाज्ञया ॥
परेणैव हि सूक्ष्मेण स्थूलेन त्रितयेन तु ।

NT XX.9cd–10ab

Being impelled by the command of Lord Śiva, the deities unite the aspirant by means of threefold *yoga*. These three are the highest, the subtle and the gross.

The Supreme Lord, the immanent, pure, source of all, abides in all and bestows grace to everybody. He is light and reflecting awareness. It shines as the very knowing consciousness of the heart, wherein all the *śakti*s remain merged and can be identified only with the will of the Lord. Conceiving this reality in the heart the spiritual guide unites the disciple with the Lord pulsating as vibrative will, shining as non-deviating pure-consciousness, where knowledge has attained super excellence as radiant rays of light which otherwise is known as the state of activity. The process of uniting the bonded soul with this realm of lustrous glory is known as oblation (*paśunivedanam*) and unity (*yoga*) – the act of identification with the Lord. It is designated as an undifferentiated unity of *icchā, jñāna* and *kriyā* shining uniformly. This is known as *para yoga*, the supreme unity. But the *yoga* known as *sūkṣma* is composed of *śakti* which is attainable by means of the dynamic energy.

सूक्ष्मं शक्तिमयं ज्ञानं ज्ञानशक्त्या तु गम्यते ॥
अरावरावरावण्या ध्वनिभावानुसारकम् ।

NT XX.22cd–23ab

The subtle knowledge is composed of the dynamic energy, but it is attained by means of the dynamic energy of *jñāna*. It is resonant with the primal sound quite dissimilar with the sound of *mantra*, yet it is the innate sound of self-reflective-consciousness in the form of the inner sound of *nāda* alone.

This subtle form of *yoga* is a method of application to bring the disciple to be merged in the self of the spiritual teacher by means of agitating the vital force of the disciple with the agitating vital force of his own. The teacher then tries to bring the powers of the sense organs of the disciple to be overpowered by his own and the body of the other is thus made as belonging to him. This process being complete he places the disciple's self in the core of the heart of his own and then penetrates the self from above and below so that complete equiflavouredness may occur and finally it may be raised to the level of the supreme consciousness. While *sthūla*, the gross method is described as an application of *mantra, mudrā* and other external materials for the achievement of one's own purpose. It should

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be remembered in this context that the gross ultimately goes to merge in the subtle and finally in the transcendent.

In order to convey the idea of gross and subtle properly ancient thinkers state thus:

अन्तर्मुखं स्वरूपं ज्ञेयस्य ज्ञानमस्य तु ज्ञाता ।
ज्ञानस्य ज्ञातृतनोश्चितिरेकाऽस्यास्त्वहं नान्यः ॥

ViPañcā III.32

Knowledge in essence is the inner character (*svarūpa*) of the knowable object while that of knowledge is the knowing subject. Both of knowledge and the knowing subject, consciousness alone is the aspect directed inside and of that is 'I' (*aham*) which is not something different from them.

All the entities are seen in two aspects – the one is *antarmukha* (inward) and the other is *bahirmukha* (outward). The one that directs inwardly is the subtle which is characterised by inclusiveness (*anuvṛttarūpam*), and that which is gross has the character of exclusiveness (*vyāvṛtta*). In the world things like the jar, the pot and so on are gross objects. The jar is the gross object, while knowledge with regard to the jar is subtle. If the process continues and is traced inwardly the gross knowledge recedes towards the knowing subject and finally it goes back to have its rest in the knowing subject characterised by reflecting awareness of consciousness. If the portion of the reflecting awareness as attributed to consciousness is put aside for a moment that which remains shining is nothing but I '*aham*'. This is known as *param.*

Leaving aside the grossness of the objects the Agamic thinkers ponder upon the presence of elements, not indeed in the physical sense. In their view the *yogin* who has developed his subtle super sensory insight sees the presence of smell and so on in different layers of entities. So it is stated in the **Tantrāloka:**

धरायां गुणतत्त्वान्ते मायान्ते क्रमशः स्थिताः ।
गन्धो रसो रूपमन्तः सूक्ष्मभावक्रमेण तु ॥
इति स्थिते नये शक्तितत्त्वान्तेऽप्यस्ति सौक्ष्म्यभाक् ।
स्पर्शः कोऽपि सदा यस्मै योगिनः स्पृहयालवः ॥
तत्स्पर्शान्ते तु संवित्तिः शुद्धचिद्व्योमरूपिणी ।

TĀl XI.29–31ab

In the earth, at the end of *guṇa* principle (from water to *guṇa*) and *māyā* (i.e., from *puruṣa* to *māyā*) there exist smell, taste and colour, respectively in the order of their comparative subtlety. In accordance to this established reason even at the end of the *śakti* principle there

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is a certain subtle form of touch, for experiencing which *yogin*s are all the time longing. But consciousness at the end of (above stated) touch shines as pure consciousness with the characteristic of void.

All the physical objects viewed as five gross elements known as the earth, water and so on and their properties which are easily perceptible to sense organs persist in subtle forms. They can be experienced only by the *yogin.*

Ultimately consciousness assumes the form of the void of pure consciousness. In this context, it seems relevant to say that gross and subtle nature of objects is relative, not absolute. For example, in the gross substance like the earth it possesses gross smell but when the subtle nature of the earth becomes visible to the right seer he experiences subtle smell even there. Similarly taste and colour and so on show themselves to the rarefied vision of the *yogin.* Therefore it is stated:

अतो विन्दुरतो नादो रूपमस्मादतो रसः ।
प्रवर्तन्तेऽचिरेणैव क्षोभकत्वेन देहिनः ॥

SpKā III.10

From this (*unmeṣa*) appear (supernormal) light, (supernormal) sound, (supernormal) form, (supernormal) taste, in a short time, to the *yogī* who has not yet done away with the identification of the Self with the body, which, however, are only a disturbing factor (in the full realization of the *Spanda* principle). (Tr. J. Singh)

The *yogin* by means of continuous practice experiences the light of a star in the middle of the two eyebrows (*tārakāprakāśarūpa*) expressive of the entire objective world. Similarly, he experiences sound representing all undifferentiated words, from which is a glow shining even in darkness, supernatural taste experienced on the tip of the tongue. It should be kept in mind that the experience of such smell, taste, form and touch is very subtle.

With reference to speech we find that it is broadly of two types, the one is audible conveyed by the person using his vocal organ to make a sound of syllables and speech. It is gross. In the language of the traditional texts it is known as *vaikharī* speech, that is, utterance of sounds or words which is complete consisting of full and intelligible sentences. The other is inaudible, subtle and more subtle.

The **Śāmba Pañcāśikā** gives a vivid description of speech in the following verse.

या सा मित्रावरुणसदनादुच्चरन्ती त्रिषष्टिं

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वर्णानत्र प्रकटकरणैः प्राणसङ्गात् प्रसूतान् ।
तां पश्यन्तीं प्रथममुदितां मध्यमां बुद्धिसंस्थां
वाचं वक्त्रे करणविशदां वैखरीं च प्रपद्ये ॥

ŚāmPañcā 4

I surrender myself to her who while moving upward from the abode of the sun and the water (*mitrāvaruṇa*) gives birth to sixty-three syllables in association with the vital energy by making the instrument well-manifest. I bow to her who becomes manifest first as *paśyantī*, then *madhyamā*, established in the intellect and finally as *vaikharī*, distinctly manifest in the vocal organs.

Svabhāva, 'the inherent nature', is seen in the above three aspects. These three are the knowable object, the instrument of knowledge and the knowing subject (*vedya, vedana* and *veditā*), gross, subtle and transcendent (*sthūlam*, *sūkṣmam* and *param*).

As denoting the meaning of various states (*avasthā*), the terms *sthūla*, *sūkṣma* and *para*, signify waking, dream and deep sleep respectively. The state of waking is something that is perceptible to all. The object in this state is an entity which remains steady outside and is common to all subjects. It is the gross state, while subtler than the waking state is the state of dreaming when the objects shine only to the mind. But the deep sleep resembles the *samādhi* when all traces of knowable objects and the knower of the objects disappear. It may be called as *para*. But real *para*, though remaining beyond is like a thread of a garland (*sraksūtrakalpam*) threading through the three states mentioned above.

According to the **Triśirobhairava**, the gross body of ours is composed of all principles (*sarvatattvamaya*). That which appears as hard is the earth, the liquid is the water and so on. They are gross, in the sense, that they are tangible and perceptible, but even in the gross body there shine sense organs – as openings or outlets (*gavākṣaparipūrṇam*) of the body-structure. They are superintended by the divine energies (*karaṇadevya indriyalakṣaṇāḥ śaktayaḥ*) which are, indeed, subtle.

But beyond the gross body there shines subtle body composed of subtle elements. That is thought to be made of syllables. This subtle body known as *puryaṣṭaka*, the host of eight priniciples, namely intellect, egoism, mind and five subtle elements like sound and so on, has as its essence subtle syllabic sounds. According to Mahārtha school of Kashmir Śaiva doctrine the subtle body constituted of eight constituents is superintended over by different *siddhas*, the perfected souls, nondifferent from shining *bhairava* as the aggregate

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of syllables.

The gross body though made of elements is considered by a certain school of Tantric worshippers as the proper seat of the divine. It represents everything that exists in the external universe. *Vṛndacakra*s are supposed to be the constituents of the subtle body in the form of syllables. Though the number of *mātṛkā*s is fifty, but according to Krama school of Kashmir Śaivism the number is sixty-four presided over by different *siddhā*s beginning with *mantrasiddhā* and ending finally with *Śāmbhavasiddhā*. These syllables are as follows:

The number of *vṛndacakra*s is sixty-four:
(a) *Jñānasiddhā* - sixteen vowels,
(b) *mantrasiddhā* - twenty-four consonants from *k* to *bh*,
(c) *melāpasiddhā* - twelve neuters,
(d) *śāktasiddhā* - eight from *y* to *h*,
(e) *śāmbhavasiddhā* - four *akāra kalā rūpāḥ*. They are *bindu, ardhacandra, nirodha* and *nāda* = four.

Therefore, the total is sixty-four.

The Śaiva scholars see the world as composed of words and thoughts and the beyond:

स्थूलं शब्द इति प्रोक्तं सूक्ष्मं चिन्तामयं भवेत् ।
चिन्तया रहितं यत्तु तत्परं परिकीर्तितम् ॥

SākāT I.8

The gross is said to be the sound while the subtle is composed of thought and that which is free from thought is called *para*, the beyond.

Knowledge in the form of texts emerges from the Lord and it is composed of pure consciousness, the supreme light of knowing agent (*paradraṣṭṛekarūpaḥ* – SvT comm. VIII.27). He is the highest source from whom the primal sound becomes manifest. This sound is extremely subtle and pure.

अदृष्टविग्रहायातं शिवात् परमकारणात् ॥
ध्वनिरूपं सुसूक्ष्मं तु सुशुद्धं सुप्रभान्वितम् ।

SvT VIII 27cd-28ab

From the imperceptible form of Śiva who is the ultimate source, emerged the sound which is very subtle and is extremely pure. It is closely associated with pure light of knowledge.

In the creative upsurge of the Divine Lord the first emanation that occurs

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is the primal sound. It is reflective cognition of *nāda* (*nādāmarśātmakam*) belonging to the Lord, is of the nature of highest knowledge (*mahājñānarūpaḥ*). Being exceedingly subtle it cannot possibly become the object of knowledge (*aprameya*), but the same knowledge though primarily subtle in the beginning manifests itself in the beginning as gross form of syllables and speech. Later on all literature developed through the agenthood of Śiva in His *sakala* form.

पुरुषार्थं विचार्याशु साधनानि पृथक् पृथक् ॥
लौकिकादिशिवान्तानि परापरविभूतये ।
तदनुग्रहयोग्यानां स्वे स्वे विषयगोचरे ॥
अनुष्टुप्छन्दसा बद्धं कोट्यर्बुदसहस्रधा ।

SvT VIII.29cd-31ab

Millions of verses were composed in *anuṣṭup* metre after considering the highest aims of each individual and also the distinct means to attain it. Therefore all texts beginning from the worldly and ending in Śiva were revealed for the purpose of attaining powers high or low to those who deserve His grace. They were made manifest in order that they may remain engaged in their respective spheres of activities.

The primal sound (*nāda*) as stated earlier, is subtle (*sūkṣma*) but words which are the life of literature are gross (*sthūla*). The one is imperceptible to sense organs while the other is perceptible. The former is only conceived by self-seaing consciousness as the very nature of itself. It is non-different from the self, but the latter is known as an object of knowledge. It is *prameya* 'knowable', *grāhya* 'grasped' and conceived by the knowing subject. It is different and totally distinct from the Self. But it seems relevant to note from the non-dualistic point of view that the gross though being gross, is not at all separate from the light of consciousness, for all the *śāstras* in whatever form they may shine, shine in the light of consciousness and finally merge in the ocean of *nāda*, the singleness of all sentences. It is stated in the **Svacchanda Tantra** (*vākyaikavākyatayā*) that sentences merge in words and the latter in syllables and syllables in the pulsating *nāda* which goes to rest in the sublime ocean of *nāda*. In this context, it is proper to state that among the five elements (*pañcabhūtas*) the first four are distinctly gross in the sense that earth, water, fire and air are perceptible to senses but the fifth, the void, is only inferred as an object existing to allow space to all (*avakāśadānāt*).

From the above statement it is clear that the gross and subtle nature of the universe is comparative. At one end stand the gross elements, for example, the earth supporting all and the base of all, is the lowest limit, while water, fire,

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air are comparatively finer than the previous ones. The *tanmātra*s, the subtle elements and their respective sources are considered subtler than the evolved principle. Even then the end of subtlety does not cease. The →*indriya*s both inner sense and motor organs being beyond perception are subtler than visible objects. Even more subtle are the mind, intellect, ego and finally *prakṛti*, the Great Mother of the universe, is the subtlest and beyond perception.

The universe is viewed in two aspects, of which the one is the knowable. It is again classified under three groups according to their nature of grossness, subtlety and the one that transcends them:

इत्थं त्र्यात्माध्वनो भेदः स्थूलसूक्ष्मपरत्वतः ॥
मेयभागगतः प्रोक्तः पुरतत्त्वकलात्मकः ।

TĀl XI.42cd–43ab

Thus the threefold division of the path with the characteristics of the gross, the subtle and the beyond. The one which remains in the portion of the knowable is of the nature of the world, the principles and minute fractional units (*kalā*s).

The universe as knowable object remains manifest as worlds (*pura*) in its grossest forms. These forms are innumerable yet for the practical purpose they are arranged and classified by numbers. They are considered to have emerged from a particular principle (*tattva*). The principle with which a group of worlds remain closely related, is considered to be the cause, the very source of them. The principles from which they evolve are finer than the worlds themselves. They permeate each of them in a very subtle way. In Sanskrit it is designated as *tattva*, the essence, unmixed element, different from the gross form of the earth or water. It is as if a genus for all particulars abiding in each of them and remains inseparably present in each group of the worlds.

But the Agamic thinkers delve deeper into the concept by saying that *tattva*s, like the earth and so on are pervaded and fashioned by *kalā*s, viz. *nivṛtti, pratiṣṭhā* and so on. These *kalā*s function at the level of the earth by arresting the process of creative vibration from proceeding further. The principle of water should be seen not as a fluid substance but as the nourishing principle (*āpyāyinī*), pervading all the principles from the lowest level of water upto *prakṛti*. When considered in this way all the knowable objects shine as gross, subtle and the beyond.

Here, the universe composed of five elements has been identified with the five faced Śiva. The Supreme Lord has a body of His own composed of five *mantra*s. He is called *pañcamantratanu*. These *mantra*s, sacred syllables, are very subtle which represent the body of the Lord. Not only that his five faces are Sadyojāta,

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Vāmadeva, Aghora, Tatpuruṣa and Īśāna representing consciousness, bliss, will, knowledge and action, manifesting themselves in the form of dynamic energy (*śaktis*) inseparably united with the Divine Lord, but they are, indeed, five subtle forms of elements. Thus the elements in their subtle form are present and meditated upon as five faces of the Lord. The **Kālottara** states:

सद्यस्तु पृथिवी ज्ञेया वामो ह्यापः प्रकीर्तिताः ।
अघोरस्तेज इत्युक्तं वायुस्तत्पुरुषः स्मृतः ॥
आकाशस्तु भवेदीशः स्वयं देवो महेश्वरः ।

Kālottara quoted in TĀl XI under verse 20

Sadyojāta (face of God) is to be known as the earth, Vāmadeva is described as water, Aghora is said to be fire and air is known as Tatpuruṣa but the void should be Īśāna – the divine and Great Lord Śiva himself.

The visible faces in an icon of Śiva face different directions, namely the east, the south, the west and the north. The eastern face representing Tatpuruṣa is characterised by its extendedness towards light, is thought to be the east. The southern face representing the face of Aghora is favourable to the flooded light. While Sadyojāta face is the west which is opposed to light. The face in the north is known as Vāmadeva. It is predominantly of the nature of objectivity because of its close contact with the moon, but the upper face being solely of the character of light is called Īśāna. The five faces of Śiva, the Lord are interpreted as the subtle presence of the elements (*bhūtavyāptya*).

खमरुद्वह्निजलभूखानि वक्त्राण्यमुष्य हि ॥

TĀl XV.206cd

The void, the air, the fire, the water and the earth are indeed openings in the form of faces related to Him.

The concept of the gross and the subtle has been viewed by Abhinavagupta as effects (*kārya*) and instruments (*kāraṇa*) thus:

त्रयोदशविधा चात्र बाह्यान्तःकरणावली ।
कार्यवर्गश्च दशधा स्थूलसूक्ष्मत्वभेदतः ॥

ĪPraKā III.1.11

As regards the subject, the instruments are thirteen-fold functioning externally and internally and the host of products are tenfold in accordance to the difference of their grossness and subtlety.

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The instruments of knowledge and activity are thirteen. The inner organs are three namely, *buddhi*, *ahaṃkāra* and *manas* functioning as ascertainment, the ego – feeling and the mind. That it is the knower of the object, the doer and ascertainment respectively. The sense organs are five. They are mere receivers of sense contact and are useful to the intellect for the ascertainment of its nature. Therefore five are the sense organs related to the intellect and the motor organs are also five to serve the purpose of activity. The latter are the specific forms of egoism.

The gross products are the earth, water, fire, air and ether. Then subtle forms are smell, taste, colour, touch and sound. The gross are the means, by which one is able to infer the existence of the subtle.

स्थूलं विभक्तमविभागस्यानुमापकम् ... ।

ĪPraVim III.1.11

The gross are of the nature of differentiation which are the means to infer the undifferentiate one.

Nāda, the primal sound, is only conceived by *yogins*. It is so subtle that without developing ultra-sensory vision one is incapable of perceiving it. It is ever-existing and goes on pulsating all the time. Moreover, it is the active principle behind all the speeches or rather it goes on manifesting itself in the inner level of consciousness as different speeches as an indicating agent (*vācaka*) and indicated meaning (*vācya*) (*vivartate'rthabhāvena*).

But according to some Siddhānta-Śaivas speech has the highest aspect known as *sūkṣmāvāk*, which in other doctrine is known as *parāvāk*, the speech Supreme.

Sound is of various types, some subtle and some others are gross. According to Kashmir Śaiva doctrine the variants of sound under the subtle class are as follows:

षड्जाख्यर्षभगान्धारमध्यमाः पञ्चमः प्रिये ।
धैवतो निषधश्चैव स्वराः सप्त प्रकीर्तिताः ॥
सूक्ष्मशब्दाः स्मृता ह्येते चराचररवस्थिताः ॥

SvT XII.15,17cd

Seven notes of music are known as *ṣaḍja, ṛṣabha, gāndhāra, madhyama, pañcama, dhaivata* and *niṣadha*. These subtle sounds are established in all mobile and immobile sounds.

But some sounds are gross. It is also referred to in the same text:

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स्थूलांश्चैव प्रवक्ष्यामि यथावत्तान्निबोध मे ।
भेरीपटहशङ्खोत्थो मृदङ्गपणवोत्थितः ॥
वेणुगोमुखशब्दश्च मन्दलो दर्दुरो ध्वनिः ।
तन्त्रीवाद्यानि चित्राणि करवाद्यानि यानि च ॥
संयोगजवियोगोत्थाः काष्ठपाषाणवारिजाः ।
अपभ्रंशोऽनुनासिक्यः संस्कृतः प्राकृतो रवः ॥

SvT XII.18–20

I shall tell the gross aspects in a proper way, listen to it from me. The sound emerged from the kettle-drum, the drum, the conch-shell, and the sound emerged from the tabour and the cymbal, the musical sound emerged from flutes and horns, the sound of *mandala*, a drum and the sound of the cloud or frogs. Stringed musical instruments of various types and musical instruments played on by hands, all such sounds are born of contact and without contact, are born by striking wooden sticks, stones and water. The corrupt speech, the nasal sound, Sanskrit and Prakrit are only variants of sounds (in essence).

Manifestation in the Arts

Although ordinarily man is engaged with the gross objects yet unknowingly he goes beyond it and experiences a subtle state. The one who is *sthūladṛk*, the viewer of the gross, lives in the narrow sheaths (*kośa*) of the food, of the vital air and the mind – the latter that is, refinement of the mind has not yet properly developed in such a person. As soon as it goes on developing the whole outlook of the viewer begins to change. It opens up a new vista to him with the result he starts to appreciate the beautiful. Though apparently there lies no reason why on seeing a pleasing object or hearing an agreeable sound he feels the pulsation of the heart and naturally asks himself like the prince Duṣyanta thus:

रम्याणि वीक्ष्य मधुरांश्च निशम्य शब्दान्
पर्युत्सुको भवति यत्सुखितोऽपि जन्तुः ।
तच्चेतसा स्मरति नूनमबोधपूर्वं
भावस्थिराणि जननान्तरसौहृदानि ॥

AbhŚāk V.2

When a being, although in enjoyment of happiness, becomes perturbed on seeing charming objects or on hearing agreeable sounds, then, indeed, he mentally remembers, without being conscious (of

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the fact), the associations (*lit.* friendships) of past lives remaining permanently impressed (on the mind). (Tr. M.R. Kale)

The prince was perturbed by listening to a pleasant song. He felt uneasiness, even without separation from his beloved person (*iṣṭajanavirahādṛte'pi*). The prince being a person of ripe and refined taste it is but natural for him to perceive directly the latent friendship of past lives, while the person with gross vision sees only the gross.

The world made of pleasing touch, sweet taste and sound presents to the man of the street an object as existing, shining for the moment but even then it finally makes the ordinary man of gross vision feel an endearing love for it, but in the absence of rarefied insight it fails to have any lasting appeal to him.

Kālidāsa states:

द्रवः संघातकठिनः स्थूलः सूक्ष्मो लघुर्गुरुः ।
व्यक्तो व्यक्तेतरश्चासि प्राकाम्यं ते विभूतिषु ॥

Kum II.11

Thou art fluid and hard on account of the close contact of the particles (adhesion); gross and subtile; light and yet heavy; perceptible and yet the opposite of that; thy will is absolute in (the manifestation of) the energies (or miraculous powers). (Tr. M. R. Kale)

Representation of beautiful in art is a complex process involving a number of processes – some of them are gross, while others are very subtle. Daṇḍī says:

इङ्गिताकारलक्ष्योऽर्थः सौक्ष्म्यात् सूक्ष्म इति स्मृतः ।

Kāvyād II.260

When the meaning is indicated delicately by gesture and *ākāra* (or the condition of the body) then it is considered to be *sukṣma.* (Tr. V. Nārāyaṇa)

The visible form and gesture mean little to a man of ordinary vision but they indicate something beyond – that is *sūkṣma.* It can only be known to the sensitive initiates.

In drama we watch the movement of the dramatic personæ. The gaits are meaningful. They are subtle and only to be understood by a real aesthete. For this reason the Alaṅkāra-Śāstras describe *sūkṣma* as one of the figures of speech. It is defined thus:

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संलक्षितस्तु सूक्ष्मोऽर्थ आकारेणेङ्गितेन वा ।
कयापि सूच्यते भङ्ग्या यत्र सूक्ष्मं तदुच्यते ॥

SāDar X.119

When the subtle mark is observed either of figure or of the indicative sign (regarding a person) by means of certain gesture is called *sūkṣma.*

Since this figure of speech slips the view of the gross-minded (*sthūlamatibhirasaṃlakṣya*) and is only perceived by the keen sighted, is therefore called *sūkṣma.* It is of two types, one is indicated by the figure and the other is known by an indication. Viśvanātha, the author of the **Sāhitya-Darpaṇa** illustrates these two by citing two examples. In the one, the intimate girl friend of the maiden observes some changes in her features which indicate that she had behaved like a man during her intercourse with her lover. This is not verbally stated but indicated by drawing a figure of a sword on her palm that befits a male. The second example is that of closing of her eyes and closing the open lotus. Perceiving that her lover had his mind anxious about the time of assignation, the quick-witted dame closed the lotus flower – thus the time of meeting was indicated by the closing of the flower. Because only during the night the lotus closes – therefore, night is indicated by means of this subtle indication. These two examples are used as suggestive of subtle matters. Similarly *hāvas* – any of the feminine coquettish gestures calculated to excite amorous sensation may be illustrated as subtle features.

The concepts *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *para* are visualised as a process indicative of a movement from the gross to the subtle and the mental state which transcends or pervades both the gross and the subtle. The Upanisadic thought and the ritual of the Brāhmaṇas form the basis of all forms of Indian Arts. Basically the nature of each form relates to the reality understood at its grossest which it transcends to become universal or transcendent. One has to realise that the gross and the subtle are the modes through which the identification of the transcendent (i.e. beyond the gross and the subtle) with the form is attained. Because the artistic creation is the embodiment of this entity in a gross form, what is subtle in it is only an object of perception. The idea of the gross form by which it is known intellectually and the substance of the form as it is perceived by the senses are distinguished as sensational and intelligible elements of the appearance. This refers to correspondence between the ideas and the things and this correspondence tends towards identity of the higher level. But the identity is possible to be attained only in the Absolute. Keeping this in view the art may be defined as the refined and sophisticated skill of creating a new world through any particular artistic medium such as literature, sculpture, architecture, music

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and dance. In this context the nature of the communication between the work of art and the receiver of art plays an important role because as it is the capacity of the artist to give form to incipient, nascent states of being which in turn are evoked in the mind of the spectator; so is it the capacity of understanding in a receiver who may be a seer, spectator, or a listener, to seek from the art what it is yielding.

Bharata in his **Nāṭya-Śāstra** (I–II) is seen contemplating upon the thoughts and the rituals of the Upaniṣads and the Brāhmaṇas by establishing relationship of the physical (gross) to the psychical (subtle) and metaphysical (beyond) on the one hand and the limited physical space being made into a symbolic design just like forming the *vedikā* of the *yajña* in the Vedas and on the other hand considering those who perform on it not as particular individuals portraying subjective emotion but as single entities who represent part of an organic whole.

In the process of worship where the images of supreme deities take form, the descriptions are found in Vedic lauds or myths and in later scriptures that provide the germ from which a particular deity is to be visualised. Thus conceived, to the form of a *dhyānamantra* or *sādhana* as called in Tantra and Āgama, imagined offerings are made. Such interior worship of a *mantra*-body is subtle (*sūkṣma*) worship and the external worship of a physical image is termed as gross (*sthūla*). *Para-rūpa* is a mode of worship in which direct worship is paid to the deity. Such gnosis is possible and permissible only to the perfect yogin.

Process

The concept of *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *para* have been investigated while keeping in view different viewpoints as preserved in different texts. At the gross level the earth, water and such other matters manifest in different forms and shapes. It is common to indicate these forms and shapes as coarse and fine or large and small. All these forms and shapes also possess the subtle quality of being. Indeed all human creativity be it in the form of poetry, music, dance, drama, sculpture, architecture, painting or any other form, is a different manifestation of *para* absolute manifested equally in the small and the great, animate and inanimate, good or evil.

But the quest for knowing the all-pervading entity that eludes sense organs does not end there, it remains persistant even at the subtle level of vision. In other words we may say that what is gross or more external is less pervasive and therefore away from the reality than what is subtle is more internal and more pervasive and thus near the reality. The inquiring aspirant gets rest only

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on realizing the oneness with the transcendent (*para*) that nourishes the whole universe with its affluence.

Conclusion

The terms *sthūla, sūkṣma* and *para*, may seem distinct concepts at the phenomenal plane. But it is an aspirant, a real aesthete (*sahṛdaya*) who perceives these concepts emerging from the same source. Actually the gross may be understood as the perceptible universe consisting of form, taste, colour, sound and so on. Although varied in nature the beauty in each of these gross forms become manifest only when assimilated to the knowing self:

परव्यवस्थापि परे यावन्नात्मीकृतः परः ।
तावन्न शक्यते कर्तुं यतो बुद्धः परः परे ॥

PTrīVi under verse 4

Even the ascertainment of difference cannot be made in the different objects so long as the Supreme is not assimilated to oneself, since the different object is known only in the Supreme, i.e. the different object has its *raison dētre* only in the Supreme. (Tr. J. Singh)

How that Supreme is realised, the Upaniṣads say:

अणोरणीयान् महतो महीयानात्माऽस्य जन्तोर्निहितो गुहायाम् ।
तमक्रतुः पश्यति वीतशोको धातुः प्रसादान्महिमानमात्मनः ॥

KaṭhUp II.20

The subtlest of the subtle and the greatest of the great
he dwells as the self here in the hearts of created beings;

Free from desire, and far from sorrow, through the impulsive senses having been quietened,

he sees (realises) the supreme glory of Ātman.
(Tr. V.M. Bedekar and G.B. Palsule)

Hemendra Nath Chakravarty

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SṚṢṬI-STHITI-SAṂHĀRA

Overview

Sṛṣṭi (f.), *sthiti* (f.) and *saṃhāra* (m.) constitute a triad which alludes to a ceaseless process of creation, maintenance and dissolution and the cycle begins anew. The concept permeates Indian thought and philosophy in all its branches of knowledge. It provides the basic dynamics of the Indian arts where each artistic expression is a symbolic recreation in specific time of the eternal and cosmic cycle of creation, maintenance and dissolution. A vast corpus of myth emerges to elucidate the process, specially in the myths of Devī, Viṣṇu and Śiva. Iconographical forms such as *saṃhāramūrti* of Śiva develop. Many rituals are a re-enactment of this process of creation, maintenance and dissolution. The Vedic ritual of the *yajña* where the *śālā* and the altars are made and razed after performance, correspond to the Durgā Pūjā in Eastern India and Mudiyeṭṭu in Kerala where images are made, worshipped and immersed signify the process of *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti* and *saṃhāra*.

Many schools of Indian philosophy elucidate the concept from their respective points of view. The Tantra and Āgama interpret the concept as unfoldment and enfoldment of the first principle.

The three aspects dealing with creation, preservation and dissolution have been highlighted in different ways in literature, art, music and philosophical schools. While one deity has been assigned a particular task, there are instances where a deity has been conceived as the root of all these three elements. In the Kāvya-literature Lord Śiva has been described as the cause of *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *saṃhāra*.

The Hiraṇyagarbha representation has been a favourite subject of artists and this has been beautifully depicted in the Pahari miniatures in which an oval shaped big golden egg emerges as the cause of creation. In the Jaina philosophy, these concepts have been repeatedly narrated in the life events of Jaina Tīrthaṅkaras. The Trivikrama form of Viṣṇu is often interpreted as manifestation of three principles. This motif has been popular in the sculptural renderings. In the Buddhist philosophy, although all these three concepts have been accepted but the last one as *mahāparinirvāṇa* has been considered the most celebrated event. It is for this reason that the demise of the Buddha is not an event of sorrow or mourning but a reason of joy and merriment. We, therefore, find on the Buddhist and Jaina *stūpa*s, the figures of dancing nymphs and

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musicians. In music, the concept plays a vital role in this regard as the very foundation of universe is from the *nāda* (primal sound – *nādādhīnaṃ jagat*).

Etymology and Related Words

The word *sṛṣṭi* is an action noun derived from the root *sṛj-* 'to produce' or 'to discharge' or 'to create'. Thus, it means the act of creation or production. As an object noun it also denotes that which is created. While generally the word stands for the whole world, sometimes it refers to creation of certain objects in specific contexts. Often it denotes nature in contrast to culture. The word *sṛṣṭi* literally also means 'emanation' or 'discharge' (*visarga*). In fact, one of the theories of creation of the world states that the world has emanated from its original cause.

The synonyms of *sṛṣṭi* are: *utpatti* - 'birth', 'origin', 'source'; *prabhava* – 'source', 'origin'; *udaya* 'rising up' 'coming forth'; and *saṃsāra* 'mundane existence', 'the world'.

The term *sthiti* also is an action noun and is derived from the root *sthā-* 'to stand', 'to stay' or 'to be stable', literally it means the act of standing, standing firm or stable. In early literature on cosmogony the term *sthiti* is used in the sense of continued existence of creation. It thus signifies the stage immediately after the creation. The term *sthiti* also denotes any situation or a state, a position or abode. At a further stage anything stable, for instance, the earth, came to be signified by the term *sthiti.*

The word *saṃhāra* is an action noun derived from the root *hṛ-* preceded by *sam* meaning 'to bring together', 'to collect' or 'to contract'. *Saṃhāra* thus stands for 'collection' or 'withdrawal' or 'contraction'. In cosmogonical context the term denotes total annihilation or dissolution of the universe. *Saṃhāra* refers to the last stage in the three-fold cosmogonical concept of creation. The term *saṃhāra* in its literal sense alludes to the theory, that the end of the world consists contraction of what has been discharged.

The synonyms of *saṃhāra* are *pralaya* 'submersion', *kalpānta, laya* or *bhaṅga.* An end of anything in the world is denoted by the term *saṃhāra.*

From different lexicons and their commentaries we may gather various shades of meaning that throw light on the concept of *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *pralaya.*

The **Amara Kośa** deals these terms as follows:

सृष्टिर्निश्चिते बहुनि त्रिषु ।

AmKo III.3.39

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The term *sṛṣṭi* conveys the sense of natural state, creation and inevitability (*niścita*); and it should be applied in three genders. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

प्रलीयते क्रियात्र प्रलयः, सात्त्विको भावः, मूर्छेत्यर्थः । यदाहुः 'प्रलये विचेतनावमत एव, सहसैव निपतनं भुवि भवति महाभूतशैथिल्यात्' ।

Kṣīrasvāmī on AmKo I.6.34

Pralaya derivatively means that (state) in which activity ceases. It is a *sāttvika bhāva* known as *mūrchā* (swoon). It is stated by ancient teachers that 'there is absence of consciousness in the state of *pralaya*', i.e. swoon. In this state one suddenly falls on the ground on account of the looseness of contact of the five elements (the constituents of the body). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Likewise the **Vaijayantī Kośa** also defines *sṛṣṭi* and *sthiti* thus:

स्वभावे स्यान्निसर्गश्च सृष्टिश्चोत्पादनेऽपि च ॥

VaiKo VIII.5.35cd

Sṛṣṭi stands for *svabhāva* (natural state) *nisarga* (Nature) as well as *utpādana* (origination). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

मर्यादा धारणा स्थितिः ॥

VaiKo III.8.15d

Sthiti stands for *maryādā* (continuation) and *dhāraṇā* (maintenance). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

निवेशो रचना स्थितिः ॥

VaiKo V.2.14d

Sthiti means *niveśa* (settlement) and *racanā* (disposition). (Tr. P. Ghosal)

The above lexicon defines the concept of *pralaya* in a different way:

प्रतिसर्गस्तु संहारः प्रलयः प्रतिसञ्चरः ।

VaiKo II.1.95ab

(The term) *pralaya* (dissolution) denotes *pratisarga* 'creation in the reverse order', *saṃhāra* 'annihilation' and *pratisañcara*, 'reabsorption'. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

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प्रलयोऽपस्पन्दनस्थितिः ।

VaiKo III.9.89b

Pralaya means that condition (when there is) absence of any vibration. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

प्रलयो मरणे श्लेषे मूर्छासंवर्तयोरपि ।

VaiKo VII.1.43ab

Pralaya denotes *maraṇa* 'death', *śleṣa* 'union', *mūrchā* 'loss of consciousness' and *saṃvarta* 'destruction' (especially periodical) also. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Layers of Meaning

Sṛṣṭi, sthiti and *saṃhāra* are generally conceived to be a process continuing its regular course of movement starting from the emptiness of a positive content which causes multifarious forms to shine forth in the mid-way of its movement, and which finally recedes and rests from where the process started. In the Vedic hymns creation starts from a state that can be conceived neither as *sat* nor as *asat*, but the seers were indeed certain that whatever is manifested, emitted or discharged is true. It is known as *kalpanā*, while *sthiti* is to mean *dhṛ-* 'to support' and 'preserve'. In the dualistic view *sṛṣṭi* and *saṃhāra* are the acts of creation and dissolution, while in Sāṃkhya they simply mean evolution and involution. In the **Bhagavad-Gītā** the idea of creation, maintenance and dissolution has been presented in the following verse:

अव्यक्तादीनि भूतानि व्यक्तमध्यानि भारत ।
अव्यक्तनिधनान्येव तत्र का परिदेवना ॥

BhG II.28

Unmanifest are the beginnings of contingent beings, manifest their middle course, unmanifest again their ends: what cause for mournings here? (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

In Tantra and Āgama they mean unfoldment, the act of contraction and extension (*saṃkoca* and *prasāra*).

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Development of the Concept

Although the terms *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti* and *saṃhāra* rarely occur in the Vedic literature, the idea behind them is conveyed by using different expressions such as roots *jan-*, *sṛj-*, *jīv-* and *api* + *i-*. Further, the ancient thinkers speculated about the creation in a wider sense which included all living and non-living objects in the world.

Ancient thinkers ask questions about the origin of the universe. The following verse reflects this quest to solve the riddle:

को अद्धा वेद क इह प्र वोचत् कुत आजाता कुत इयं विसृष्टिः ।
अर्वाग्देवा अस्य विसर्जनेनाऽथा को वेद यत आबभूव ॥
इयं विसृष्टिर्यत आबभूव यदि वा दधे यदि वा न ।
यो अस्याध्यक्षः परमे व्योमन्त्सो अङ्ग वेद यदि वा न वेद ॥

RV X.129.6–7

Who really knows? Who can presume to tell it?
Whence was it born? Whence issued this creation?
Even the Gods came after its emergence.
Then who can tell from whence it came to be?

That out of which creation has arisen,
whether it held it firm or it did not,
He who surveys it in the highest heaven,
He surely knows – or may be He does not! (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Many answers are attempted some through myths, others through philosophic discourse. In the mythical world every prominent deity in the Vedic pantheon is involved in the act of creation. In fact, "the creation of the universe, indeed, constitutes almost an inevitable feature of the full-fledged mythological personalities of the Vedic gods" (R.N. Dandekar, *Insights into Hinduism*, p.153).

Frequently a Vedic deity is praised as a creator, a sustainer of the world or a protector of the earth and so on. While these mythocosmological references have hardly any bearing on the developing of cosmogony as such, there are a few *sūkta*s which are almost exclusively devoted to the problem of *sṛṣṭi*.

The well known Nāsadīya-Sūkta in the **Ṛgveda** reflects the philosophic core of speculations about the creation. This hymn provides a basis for most of the Upaniṣads which developed the theory of origin of world from the *Brahman*. The seer of the Nāsadīya-Sūkta refers to the source of creation as *tat* 'that' which alone is the highest principle behind creation.

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नासदासीन्नो सदासीत् तदानीं नासीद्रजो नो व्योमा परो यत् ।
किमावरीवः कुह कस्य शर्मन्नम्भः किमासीद्गहनं गभीरम् ॥
न मृत्युरासीदमृतं न तर्हि न रात्र्या अह्न आसीत् प्रकेतः ।
आनीदवातं स्वधया तदेकं तस्माद्धान्यन्न परः किं चनास ॥
तम आसीत् तमसा गूळ्हमग्रेऽप्रकेतं सलिलं सर्वमा इदम् ।
तुच्छ्येनाभ्वपिहितं यदासीत् तपसस्तन्महिनाजायतैकम् ॥

ṚV X.129.1–3

At first was neither Being nor Nonbeing.
There was not air nor yet sky beyond.
What was its wrapping? Where? In whose protection?
Was Water there, unfathomable and deep?

There was no death then, nor yet deathlessness;
of night or day there was not any sign.
The One breathed without breath, by its own impulse.
Other than that was nothing else at all.

Darkness was there, all wrapped around by darkness,
and all was Water indiscriminate. Then
that which was hidden by the Void, that One, emerging,
stirring, through power of Ardor, came to be. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Sāyaṇa paraphrases *tat* as *Brahman.* This hymn reflects the sense of wonder and the questioning of the seer rather than a solution to the riddle of the universe. Here the seer describes the origin as *tat* at one place and as *apraketaṃ salilam*, at another.

In his search for 'that' the Vedic seer discovered *tapas* and described the whole universe as emanating from it.

ऋतं च सत्यं चाभीद्धात् तपसोऽध्यजायत ।
ततो रात्र्यजायत ततः समुद्रो अर्णवः ॥
समुद्रादर्णवादधि संवत्सरो अजायत ।
अहोरात्राणि विदधद्विश्वस्य मिषतो वशी ॥
सूर्याचन्द्रमसौ धाता यथापूर्वमकल्पयत् ।
दिवं च पृथिवीं चान्तरिक्षमथो स्वः ॥

ṚV X.190.1–3

From blazing Ardor Cosmic Order came
and Truth; from thence was born the obscure night;
from thence the Ocean with its billowing waves.

From Ocean with its waves was born the year
which marshals the succession of nights and days,
controlling everything that blinks the eye.

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Then, as before, did the creator fashion
the Sun and Moon, the Heaven and the Earth,
the atmosphere and the domain of light. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Closely related but distinct is the conception of Hiraṇyagarbha. Now creation is seen as emerging from the golden germ. It is extolled as the sole creator of the universe.

हिरण्यगर्भः समवर्तताग्रे भूतस्य जातः पतिरेक आसीत् ।
स दाधार पृथिवीं द्यामुतेमां कस्मै देवाय हविषा विधेम ॥

ṚV X.121.1

In the beginning arose the Golden Germ:
he was, as soon as born, the Lord of Being,
sustainer of the Earth and of this Heaven.
What God shall we adore with our oblation? (Tr. R. Panikkar)

The hymn further describes how Hiraṇyagarbha made both the earth and heaven as well as the sun stable in their respective places.

Further there is the conception of *Puruṣa*, the primordial cosmic Man. The Puruṣa-Sūkta of the **Ṛgveda** sees all creation as part of *Puruṣa*.

एतावानस्य महिमातो ज्यायांश्च पूरुषः ।
पादोऽस्य विश्वा भूतानि त्रिपादस्यामृतं दिवि ॥

ṚV X.90.3

Such is the measure of his might,
and greater still than this is Man.
All beings are a fourth of him,
three fourths are the immortal in heaven. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

The Puruṣa-Sūkta has been interpreted differently by many schools of thought. Basically it is a term of structure of relating the parts to the whole. The myth of the dismemberment of Prajāpati and rememberment of Prajāpati refers to this process of creation, formation and dissolution.

The Hiraṇyagarbha alludes to the process of creation, the Puruṣa to making of all organism.

It will be clear from the above that there are three underlying themes in the process of creation. First, the idea of nothingness, a void followed by *tapas* creative heat or energy. The foundation of an embryo, an egg and finally the emergence of a cosmic image of Man.

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Both the **Yajurveda** and the **Atharvaveda** continue to dwell upon the notion of *tapas* (heat) and the cosmic Man as Prajāpati. The idea of Skambha the Cosmic Pillar, *axis mundi* is overlayered on *Puruṣa*. Both signify creation and structure of the universe. The description of *sṛṣṭi* in the **Atharvaveda** take a mystic turn and thus prepare a ground for later metaphysical accounts of creation found in the Upaniṣads. While describing the one single principle behind the universe, the **Atharvaveda** says:

यदेजति पतति यच्च तिष्ठति प्राणदप्राणन्निमिषच्च यद् भुवत् ।
तद् दाधार पृथिवीं विश्वरूपं तत् संभूय भवत्येकमेव ॥

AV X.8.11

That which hath power of motion, that which flies, or stands which breathes or breathes not, which, existing, shuts the eye–

Wearing all forms that entity upholds the earth, and in its close consistence still is only one. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

In the **Yajurveda** many rituals evolve. In most, the ritual is an instrumentality of the creation of different objects. In one significant hymn there is a beautiful description of how different creatures, gods and animals were produced from the *stotras* recited in *yajña*:

एकयाऽस्तुवत प्रजा अधीयन्त प्रजापतिरधिपतिरासीत् ।
तिसृभिरस्तुवत ब्रह्मासृज्यत ब्रह्मणस्पतिरधिपतिरासीत् ।
पञ्चभिरस्तुवत भूतान्यसृज्यन्त भूतानां पतिरधिपतिरासीत् ।
.... सप्त ऋषयोऽसृज्यन्त .... ॥
.... पितरोऽसृज्यन्त .... ऋतवोऽसृज्यन्त .... मासा असृज्यन्त ....
.... क्षत्रमसृज्यत .... ग्राम्याः पशवोऽसृज्यन्त .... ॥
.... शूद्रार्यावसृज्येत .... एकशफाः पशवोऽसृज्यन्त .... क्षुद्राः पशवोऽसृज्यन्त
.... आरण्याः पशवोऽसृज्यन्त .... द्यावापृथिवी व्यैतां .... ॥
.... वनस्पतयोऽसृज्यन्त .... प्रजा असृज्यन्त .... भूतान्यशाम्यन् .... ॥

YV XIV.28–31

With one (i.e. speech) they (i.e. the deities of the vital airs) praised; creatures were produced. Prajāpati was over-lord. With three (i.e. out-breath, upward breath and diffusive breath) they praised; the Priesthood was created. Bṛhaspati was over-lord. With five (i.e. four vital breaths and mind) they praised; beings were created. The Lord of Beings was over-lord.

... the Seven Ṛṣis were created ....
.... the Fathers were created .... the Seasons were created .... the Months were created ...

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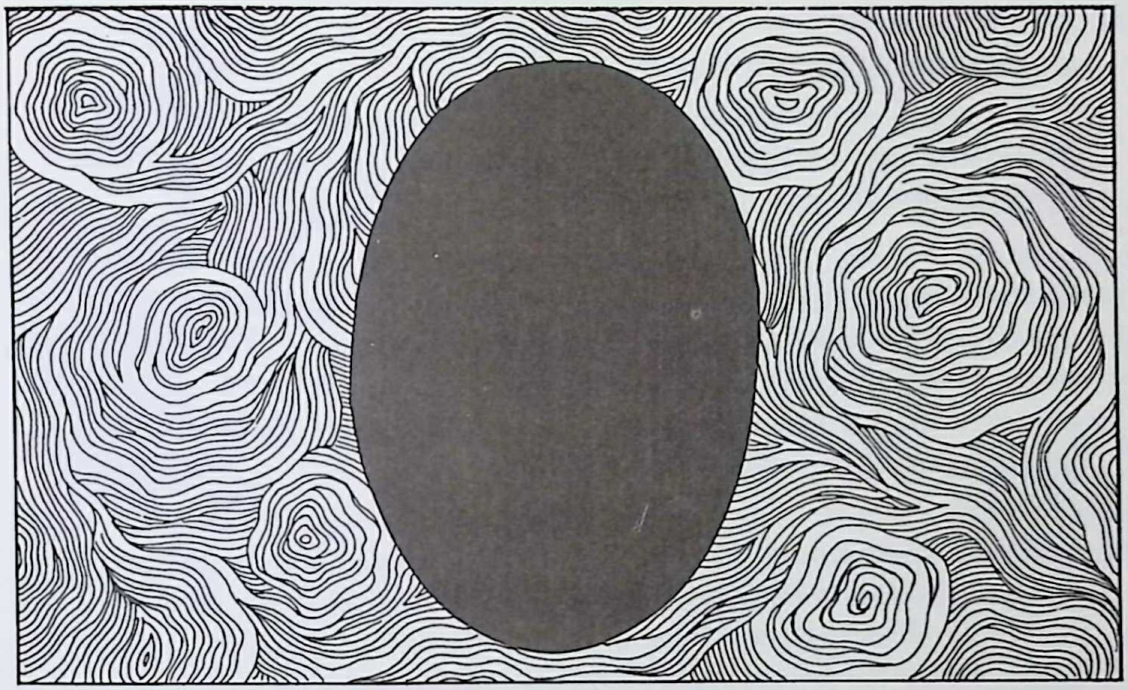

Figure 9: *Hiraṇyāṇḍa* (Golden Egg) Basohli, Pahari School, ca 1730 A.D.

.... the Nobility was created .... domestic animals were created ....
.... Śūdra and Ārya were created .... solid-hoofed animals were created ....
.... small animals were created .... forest animals were created ....
.... earth and heaven came apart ....
.... Trees were created .... creatures were created ....
.... living beings were happy .... (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

The creation of a human being is also described in the **Yajurveda** (XIX.76). The ritual cosmogony of the **Yajurveda** continues in the Brahmanic literature. Various passages in the Brāhmaṇas offer different accounts of the order and organization of creation. For instance, the **Śatapatha Brāhmaṇa** (II.5.1.1–3) describes how Prajāpati created beings one after another and finally made arrangements for their sustenance.

The Ṛgvedic Hiraṇyagarbha appears in the Brāhmaṇas as *hiraṇyāṇḍa* 'golden egg' which is produced from water, the first creation of Prajāpati. This golden egg is described as the starting point of all creation.

आपो ह वा इदमग्रे सलिलमेवास । ता अकामयन्त । कथं नु प्रजायेमहीति ।

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ता अश्राम्यन् । तास्तपोऽतप्यन्त । तासु तपस्तप्यमानासु हिरण्मयमाण्डं संबभूव । अजातो ह तर्हि संवत्सर आस । तदिदं हिरण्मयमाण्डं यावत्संवत्सरस्य वेला तावत्पर्यप्लवत ॥

ततः संवत्सरे पुरुषः समभवत्, स प्रजापतिः । तस्माद्व संवत्सर एव स्त्री वा गौर्वा वडवा वा विजायते । संवत्सरे हि प्रजापतिरजायत । स इदं हिरण्मयमाण्डं व्यरुजत् । ... वेला आसीत्तावद्बिभ्रत्पर्यप्लवत ॥

ŚBr XI.1.6.1–2

Verily, in the beginning this (universe) was water, nothing but a sea of water. The waters desired, 'How can we be reproduced?' They toiled and performed fervid devotions, when they were becoming heated, a golden egg was produced. The year, indeed, was not then in existence: this golden egg floated about for as long as the space of a year.

In a year's time a man, this Prajāpati, was produced there-from; and hence a woman, a cow, or a mare brings forth within the space of a year; for Prajāpati was born in a year. He broke open this golden egg. There was then, indeed, no resting place: only this golden egg, bearing him, floated about for as long as the space of a year.
(Tr. J. Eggeling)

The authors of Brāhmaṇas also speak of human birth from the union of a male and a female. The creation of human beings from the *yajña* is compared to the process of a birth of a human being (ŚBr IV.4.2.9).

The later Vedic literature uses the word *sṛṣṭi* also in connection with a birth of a human being or even of a tree.

तदश्वत्थो जज्ञे शम्या परिवृतो रेतसोऽश्वत्थ आशयाच्छम्येषैव शमीगर्भस्य सृष्टिः ... ॥

BauŚrSū XVIII.45

Then, from that semen was born *Aśvattha* encompassed by (concealed in) *Śamī* (tree). Since the *Śamī* (tree) is its abode, it is known as *Aśvattha*. This is the (story of) creation (of *Aśvattha*) which has its origin in the *Śamī* tree. (Tr. V.A. Kulkarny)

In the rituals described in the Brāhmaṇas specially the **Śatapatha**, the consecrated bricks used in the ritual are called *sṛṣṭi*. The Śrauta-Sūtras give a lucid description.

According to Śabarasvāmin this extension of the term *sṛṣṭi* to the ritualistic bricks used in the ritual is meant to sanctify the act of creation.

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सृष्टीरुपदधाति इति श्रूयते। ... सृष्टीनां सृष्टिषु संकीर्तनं सर्जनार्थवादार्थम् ।...

MīmSūBh I.4.22

We find the text, "Places the *sṛṣṭi* bricks" (TSam V.3.4.7) ... and the mention of the term *sṛṣṭi* serves the purpose of eulogizing the act of erection (*sarjana*). (Tr. G.N. Jha)

The ritual cosmogony of the Brahmanic literature is said to have developed out of the belief that the magical potence in the universe is augmented by means of ritual of *yajña* and cosmic process is thereby revived. Therefore, 'the ritual can aptly be compared to a clockwork which had to be keyed up in order that the world should be kept going'.

While the earlier speculation of creation is reflected in the Upaniṣads on the one hand, they also propound their own theory known as *brahmavāda*, which ascribes the origin of the creation to one single principle called *Brahman*. Thus for example, the creator is sometimes identified as Śiva and sometimes as Prajāpati.

The Ṛgvedic story of the golden embryo reappears in the **Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad** in a modified form.

The process of creation involves either pure meditation (AitUp I.1.1, AitĀr II.1.7, MaitUp II-6, BṛUp I.4.3), or *Tapas* (heat). Interesting analogies are offerred by the Upaniṣads while describing creation. One such analogy throws light on the basic concept of *sṛṣṭi*:

यथोर्णनाभिः सृजते गृह्णते च यथा पृथिव्यामोषधयः सम्भवन्ति ।
यथा सतः पुरुषात् केशलोमानि तथाऽक्षरात् सम्भवतीह विश्वम् ॥

MuṇḍUp I.1.7

As a spider emits and draws in (its thread),
As herbs arise on the earth,
As the hairs of the head and body from a living person,
So from the Imperishable arises everything here. (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The etymological meaning of *sṛṣṭi*, 'discharge' or 'emanation' occurs here for the first time. The universe is thus not a new creation. It consists only in the manifestation. Further, creation is nothing but a part of the creator as much as sparks are part of the fire. In the **Kaṭha Upaniṣad** occurs a remarkable verse:

अग्निर्यथैको भुवनं प्रविष्टो रूपंरूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव ।
एकस्तथा सर्वभूतान्तरात्मा रूपंरूपं प्रतिरूपो बहिश्च ॥

KaṭhUp V.9

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As fire which is one, on entering creation,
conforms its own form to the form of each being,
so also the One, the *ātman* within all beings,
assumes all forms, yet exists outside. (Tr. R. Panikkar)

Sṛṣṭi as described in the Upaniṣads consists of both, living and non-living world. The **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** (III.1-6) describes five different sources of creation: *anna* (food), *prāṇa* (vital breath), *manas* (intellect), *vijñāna* (consciousness) and *ānanda* (bliss), and further states that finally the creation merges in its source. These five accounts of *sṛṣṭi* reflect the gradual development from the physical to the metaphysical level. Several other speculations about creation, maintenance and dissolution are scattered throughout the Upaniṣads. Sometimes the close connection between microcosm and macrocosm is clearly pointed out as in the following passage:

तस्य वाचा सृष्टौ पृथिवी चाग्निश्चास्यामोषधयो जायन्तेऽग्निरेनाः स्वदयति .... प्राणेन सृष्टावन्तरिक्षं च वायुश्च ... चक्षुषा सृष्टौ द्यौश्चादित्यश्च .... श्रोत्रेण सृष्टा दिशश्च चन्द्रमाश्च... मनसा सृष्टा आपश्च वरुणश्च ... ।

AitĀr II.1.7

By his (created person's) speech are created earth and fire. On the earth plants grow; fire ripens them .... By breath the sky and the earth are created. By his eye are created the heaven and the sun.... By his ear were created the quarters and the moon.... By his mind were created the waters and Varuṇa. (Tr. A.B. Keith)

While describing the order and arrangement of the universe, different Upaniṣads give various accounts. For instance, the **Taittirīya Upaniṣad** describes a sequential creation from *Ātman*:

तस्माद्वा एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः संभूतः, आकाशाद्वायुः, वायोरग्निः, अग्नेरापः, अद्भ्यः पृथिवी, पृथिव्या ओषधयः, ओषधीभ्योऽन्नम्, अन्नात् पुरुषः ।

TUp II.1.1

From this Soul (*Ātman*), verily, space (*ākāśa*) arose; from space, wind (*vāyu*); from wind, fire; from fire, water; from water, the earth; from the earth, herbs; from herbs, food; from food, the person (*puruṣa*). (Tr. R.E. Hume)

The creation of the *ṣoḍaśakala puruṣa* (person having sixteen parts) described in the **Praśna Upaniṣad** (VI.4) again is a sequential creation from

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breath (*prāṇa*) up to name (*nāma*) of this world. A similar list of forms of creation is found in the **Muṇḍaka Upaniṣad** (II.1.3).

Epic and Purāṇas

The **Bhagavad-Gītā** while revealing the nature of divinity ascribes three stages of manifestation to the Divine Power:

अहमात्मा गुडाकेश सर्वभूताशयस्थितः ।
अहमादिश्च मध्यं च भूतानामन्त एव च ॥

BhG X.20

I am the Self established in the heart of all contingent being: I am the beginning (*sṛṣṭi*), the middle (*sthiti*) and the end (*saṃhāra*), of all contigent beings too. (Tr. R.C. Zaehner)

In the **Mahābhārata** accounts of creation as found in earlicr literature such as the Upaniṣads are reiterated. It clearly refers to the unending cycle of the universe which is perpetually moving. An interesting account of population of gods created in the world is given in the following verses:

एवमेतदनाद्यन्तं भूतसंहारकारकम् ।
अनादिनिधनं लोके चक्रं संपरिवर्तते ॥
त्रयस्त्रिंशत्सहस्राणि त्रयस्त्रिंशच्छतानि च ।
त्रयस्त्रिंशच्च देवानां सृष्टिः संक्षेपलक्षणा ॥

MBh I.1.38–39

Thus continues perpetually to revolve in the world, without beginning and without end, this wheel which causes the destruction of all things. The generation of Devas, as brief example, was thirty three thousand, thirty three hundred and thirty-three. (Tr. P.C. Roy)

The idea of the multiplicity of deities had already evolved in the **Ṛgveda** (III.9.9) where the figure is given three thousand three hundred and thirty nine.

Since *sṛṣṭi* and *saṃhāra* form two major topics of the Purāṇas, it is not surprising that the Puranic literature is replete with the accounts of creation and dissolution of the world. The following verse gives a very simple definition of the three terms.

सर्गः संसारसंरम्भस्तत्प्रतिष्ठा स्थितिर्मता ।
संहारो मर्दनं तस्य ... ॥

ŚPur I.10.3

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Creation is the start of the worldly process, maintenance is considered to be its steadiness while dissolution is crushing it (to dust).

All these accounts entrust the work of creation and destruction with one Supreme God who is sometimes Viṣṇu, sometimes Śiva, sometimes Brahmā, sometimes Śakti. Different processes of creation are listed in a verse in the **Śiva Purāṇa** from which we gather that according to some accounts the first creation was the result of mere thought, perception or meditation whereas the later creation was the result of the union of male and female (cf. ŚPur V.30.49–50).

Generally the Purāṇas endorse the Samkhyan view of creation.

गुणाः कालवशादेव भवन्ति विषमाः समाः ।
गुणसाम्ये लयो ज्ञेयो वैषम्ये सृष्टिरुच्यते ॥

ŚPur VII.10.40

Under the influence of *kāla, guṇa*s become equal or unequal. The equilibrium of *guṇa*s should be considered as dissolution, while imbalance (in their proportion) should be designated as creation.
(Tr. P. Ghosal)

However, there are some modifications also. The story of creation, narrated in the **Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa** may be cited as an example:

सुगतिर्योगसिद्धानां तस्मात्सर्वस्य सम्भवः ।
तस्माद्भवति चाव्यक्तस्तस्मादात्मापि जायते ॥
तस्माद्बुद्धिर्मनस्तस्मात्ततः खं पवनस्ततः ।
तस्मात्तेजस्ततस्त्वापस्तेभ्योण्डमभवत्किल ॥
अण्डो हिरण्मयो राजंस्तस्यान्तः स्वयमेव हि ।
शरीरग्रहणं पूर्वं सृष्ट्यर्थं कुरुते प्रभुः ॥
ब्रह्मा चतुर्मुखो देवो रजोमात्राधिकः सदा ।
शरीरग्रहणं कृत्वा सृजतीदं चराचरम् ॥
अण्डस्यान्तर्जगत्सर्वं सदेवा सुरमानुषम् ।
सप्तलोकान् सपातालान् सप्तद्वीपार्णवां महीम् ॥
सृष्टिं कृत्वा स भगवान् सात्त्विकीमास्थितस्तनुम् ।
क्षीरोदे केशवो भूत्वा शेषभोगमयः प्रभुः ॥
लक्ष्मीसहायो लोकांस्तु सर्वान्पालयते सदा ।
योगनिद्रां समास्थाय सर्वसत्त्वशरीरगः ॥
शुभाशुभानि कर्माणि सर्वेषां स हि पश्यति ।
अन्तकाले हरो भूत्वा जगत्संहरते पुनः ॥
तामसीं तनुमास्थाय लीलयैव महायशाः ।

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ब्रह्मातो सृष्टिकाले तु जलमध्यगतां महीम् ॥
दृष्ट्वोद्धरति यज्ञात्मा वाराहीमास्थितस्तनुम् ।
ब्रह्मास्य सर्गे परिपालने च विष्णुर्महात्मा भवतीह् नित्यम् ।
संहारकाले च हरत्वमेति त्रैधं विधत्ते स त्रिकालयोगात् ॥

VDhPur I.2.11–20

He is the ultimate goal of those who have attained perfection in yoga, which is the source of everything. From it *avyakta* emerges and from it *ātman* is born, from it intellect, then mind, then ether, then air from which fire is born. From fire water is born. It is from water the egg was born. This egg was golden. O King! inside which He Himself after assuming a body becomes engaged in creation. The fourfaced divine Brahmā being always composed of *rajas* in excess, after taking the bodily form creates the mobile and immobile worlds. The entire universe with divinities and human beings lies within the egg. After creating seven worlds along with nether regions and the earth with seven of its divisions and seven seas, Lord Keśava after assuming *sāttvika* body in *Kṣīroda* ocean enjoys *Śeṣa*, as bed. He always protects all the world being assisted by Lakṣmī. Taking recourse to meditative sleep He abides in the body of all living beings. He watches every virtuous and sinful deeds done by all and during termination after becoming Hara, He then dissolves the Universe. Assuming the *tāmasī* body, He the greatly renowned one, dissolves as in a play. At the time of creation, seeing the earth submerged in the water, He rescues it after assuming the body of Yajñavarāha. In creation Brahmā, in protection Viṣṇu the great souled, is the Lord and at the time of dissolution He becomes Hara. By the association of three-formed time the One becomes three.

The **Vāyu Purāṇa** offers a picturesque description of the whole creation compared to a tree.

अव्यक्तबीजप्रभवस्तस्यैवानुग्रहोत्थितः ।
बुद्धिस्कन्धमयश्चैव इन्द्रियाङ्कुरकोटरः ॥
महाभूतप्रशाखश्च विशेषैः पत्रवांस्तथा ।
धर्माधर्मसुपुष्पस्तु सुखदुःखफलोदयः ॥
आजीवः सर्वभूतानामयं वृक्षः सनातनः ।
एतद् ब्रह्मवनं चैव ब्रह्मन् वृक्षस्य तस्य तु ॥
अव्यक्तं कारणं यत्तु नित्यं सदसदात्मकं ।
इत्येषोऽनुग्रहः सर्गो ब्रह्मणः ... ॥

VāPur IX.106–109

[It] has sprung from *avyakta* which serves as its seed and has been

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nourished by the same. Intelligence is its trunk and faculties of senses serve for its sockets. Its branches are elements (*mahābhūtas*) while leaves are particular ones (*viśeṣaḥ*). It is flowered with virtue and vice (*dharmādharma*) followed by rise of pleasure and pain as fruits. This traditional tree is the vitality of all beings. O Brahman! it may go by the name *brahmavana* also, its cause is *avyakta* which is eternal and at the same time *sat* (existent) yet *asat* (non-existent). This creation is regarded as Brahman's favour. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

The Purāṇas speak of nine kinds of *sṛṣṭi* which are subgrouped as follows: three *prākṛtasargas* (primal creation) , five *vaikṛtasargas* (modified creation) and one *prākṛtavaikṛta sarga*. The *prākṛtasargas* consist of the creation of *buddhi* (intellect), five *tanmātras* (rudimentary elements) and *jñānendriyas* (the sense organs) and *karmendriyas* (organs of action). The *vaikṛtasargas* consist of the material world, gods, animals, human beings and feelings. There is no definite view about the last (*prākṛtavaikṛta*) *sarga* which is also called *kaumārasarga*.

The Purāṇas describe the endlessness of the creation:

यथेदानीं तथाग्रे च पश्चादप्येतदीदृशम् ।

BhāgPur III.10.13ab

As it is now, was same in the past and the same will remain in future too.

Sometimes the Purāṇas turn metaphysical and describe the creation as nothing but the manifestation of the Supreme Lord. Here they reflect the Advaita Vedānta view of creation.

The threefold classification of *sṛṣṭi* into *prākṛta, dainandina* and *nitya* is given in the **Viṣṇu Purāṇa**.

प्रसूतिः प्रकृतेर्या तु सा सृष्टिः प्राकृता स्मृता ।
दैनन्दिनी तथा प्रोक्ता नान्तरप्रलयादनु ॥
भूतान्यनुदिने यत्र जायन्ते मुनिसत्तम ।
नित्यसर्गो हि सः प्रोक्तः पुराणार्थविचक्षणैः ॥

ViPur 1.7.44–45

The productions of Prakṛti form the creation that is termed the elemental (*prākṛta*). That which ensues after a (minor) dissolution is called ephemeral creation: and the daily generation of living things is termed, by those who are versed in the Purāṇas, constant creation. (Tr. H.H. Wilson)

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Finally, it may be said that the concept of *sṛṣṭi* appears in its widest connotation in the Purāṇas. Creation out of the union of *Prakṛti* and *Puruṣa* is described in many accounts, whereas one Supreme Lord is held responsible for *sṛṣṭi* in many other accounts. Creation has no other purpose than the sport of the Supreme Lord.

जगत्सर्गादिकां क्रीडां विष्णोर्वक्ष्ये ... ।

AgPur XVII.1ab

I describe the sport of Viṣṇu, such as the creation of the world.

Manu Smṛti

The **Manu Smṛti** presents a vivid account of the golden embryo theory of creation.

सोऽभिध्याय शरीरात्स्वात्सिसृक्षुर्विविधाः प्रजाः ।
अप एव ससर्जादौ तासु बीजमवासृजत् ॥
तदण्डमभवद्धैमं सहस्रांशुसमप्रभम् ।
तस्मिञ्जज्ञे स्वयं ब्रह्मा सर्वलोकपितामहः ॥

Manu I.8–9

He, desiring to produce beings of many kinds from his own body, first with a thought created the waters, and placed his seed in them.

That (seed) became a golden egg, in brilliancy equal to the sun; in that (egg) he himself was born as Brahman, the progenitor of the whole world. (Tr. G. Bühler)

तस्मिन्नण्डे स भगवानुषित्वा परिवत्सरम् ।
स्वयमेवात्मनो ध्यानात्तदण्डमकरोद्द्विधा ॥
ताभ्यां स शकलाभ्यां च दिवं भूमिं च निर्ममे ।
मध्ये व्योम दिशश्चाष्टावपां स्थानं च शाश्वतम् ॥

Manu I.12–13

The divine one resided in that egg during a whole year, then he himself by his thought (alone) divided it into two halves.

And out of those two halves he formed heaven and earth, between them the middle sphere, the eight points of the horizon, and the eternal abode of the waters. (Tr. G. Bühler)

आसीदिदं तमोभूतमप्रज्ञातमलक्षणम् ।
अप्रतर्क्यमविज्ञेयं प्रसुप्तमिव सर्वतः ॥

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ततः स्वयंभूर्भगवानव्यक्तो व्यञ्जयन्निदम् ।
महाभूतादि वृत्तौजाः प्रादुरासीत्तमोनुदः ॥

Manu I.5–6

This (universe) existed in the shape of Darkness, unperceived, destitute of distinctive marks, unattainable by reasoning, unknowable, wholly immersed, as it were, in deep sleep.

Then the divine Self-existent (Svayambhū, himself) indiscernible, (but) making (all) this, the great elements and the rest, discernible, appeared with irresistible (creative) power, dispelling the darkness. (Tr. G. Bühler)

According to this mythological account the Self-created (*svayambhū*) Lord is the origin of *sṛṣṭi*. Meditation is the process of creation. *Sṛṣṭi* consists of both macro and micro elements, material and mental worlds. The order of creation is from gross to subtle, from matter to mind. Human beings are created at the end.

The Philosophic Schools: Darśana

The Sāṃkhya system describes *sṛṣṭi* as resulting from the activity of three *guṇas*.

गुणप्रवृत्तिकार्यो हि सर्गः ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 24

Creation is the result of the activities of the *guṇas* (*sattva* etc.). (Tr. R.S. Bhattacharya)

Sṛṣṭi and its synonym *sarga* are used to denote the act of creation and that which is created (cf. SāṃKā 52–54). The **Sāṃkhya-Sūtra** does not however use the word *sarga* but *sṛṣṭi* in both the above senses. The word *sañcara* occurring in the **Tattvasamāsa-Sūtra** (5) conveys the sense of creation. *Ārambha* in the sense of 'that which is created' is found in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (56).

It should be borne in mind that Sāṃkhya advocates the doctrine of *satkārya* (creation does not mean to create or make something new or original). Creation here means manifestation or appearance of a gross thing from its subtle material cause; in other words effect is but the cause transformed or modified. That is why an effect is defined as assuming a gross form by a subtle entity (cf. *sūkṣmāṇāṃ pūrtilābhaḥ kāryam* – YuDīp on SāṃKā 3). In essence creation is nothing but unfoldment.

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Sāṃkhya avers that only two entities are not created from subtle causes behind them; first is the *Puruṣa* principle which is regarded as immutable, self-revealing and bereft of all actions and qualites; second is the three constituents (*guṇas*) *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* in their equilibrium state, usually called *avyakta, pradhāna* or *prakṛti.* All other entities including even God are to be regarded as composite in nature, i.e. they are assemblages (*saṃghāta* or *saṃhata*) of these two ultimate principles.

Sarga is regarded as 'produced from *prakṛti* (*prakṛtikṛta*)' for obvious reasons.

इत्येष प्रकृतिकृतोमहदादि विशेषभूतपर्यन्तः । ... आरम्भः ॥

SāṃKā 56

This creation (*ārambha*), from intellect down to the gross elements is brought about by Primal Nature. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

Though *Puruṣa* is said to be the *hetu* (cause) in the evolution of the first evolute *mahat* principle (*buddhitattva*):

लिङ्गस्यान्वयिकारणं पुरुषो न भवति, हेतुस्तु भवतीति ।

YSūBh I.45

Puruṣa cannot be the cause following the causal process of evolution from *mahat* onward but may stand as *hetu.*

Yet this *hetu* is not to be taken in the popular sense of the term. Since all other *tattva*s and non-*tattva* entities are different modifications of the three *guṇa*s only and since all other efficient causes fall in the field of the *guṇa*s (having *Puruṣa* as the *adhiṣṭhātṛ*), *sarga* is rightly called *prakṛtikṛta.*

Three kinds of entities are said to be created, viz. *tattva*s, *bhūta*s and *bhāva*s. The **Yuktidīpikā** defines them as:

तत्त्वसर्गो महदादिः, भावसर्गश्च धर्मादिः, भूतसर्गश्च ब्रह्मादिः प्रवर्तते ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 21

The creation of principles begins with *mahat* and so on, while the creation of *bhāva*s, viz. *dharma* and the creation of *bhūta*s are Brahmā and so on proceeds.

Creation of *tattva*s begins with the *mahat* principle. It is to be known that this creation ends with the creation of the *bhūta*s (elements). Creation of the *bhūta*s (beings) begins with Brahmā, the creator. It ends with *stamba* (a blade

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of grass) as has been said in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** (54) and **Sāṃkhya-Sūtra** (III.47). In the creation of the *bhāvas*, *bhāvas* are the eight aspects (*rūpa*) of *buddhi* (cognitive faculty, the I-sense), viz. *dharma* (virtue, merit), *jñāna* (right understanding, wisdom), *vairāgya* (dispassion), *aiśvarya* (powers) and the opposites of these four, viz. demerit, wrong understanding, passion and inefficiency as stated in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā**:

अध्यवसायो बुद्धिधर्मो ज्ञानं विराग ऐश्वर्यम् ।
सात्त्विकमेतद्रूपं तामसमस्माद्विपर्यस्तम् ॥

SāṃKā 23

Intellect is determinative, virtue, wisdom, non-attachment, the possession of lordly powers constitute its *sāttvika* form; the reverse of these are of its *tāmasa* form. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

The results produced by these eight aspects of *buddhi* are also noticed in the **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** as follows:

धर्मेण गमनमूर्ध्वं गमनमधस्ताद् भवत्यधर्मेण ।
ज्ञानेन चापवर्गो विपर्ययादिष्यते बन्धः ॥
वैराग्यात्प्रकृतिलयः संसारो भवति राजसाद्रागात् ।
ऐश्वर्यादविघातो विपर्ययात्तद्विपर्यासः ॥

SāṃKā 44–45

Through virtue (comes about) departure upwards, and through vice departure down below; through wisdom is release (acquired) and bondage through ignorance. From non-attachment (results) merger in Primal nature, migration from passionate attachment; from power (comes about) non-obstruction, and the opposite thereof, from the contrary. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

All created entities are sometimes divided into two classes: *liṅga* and *bhāva*: *liṅgākhyo bhāvākhyastasmād dvividhaḥ pravartate sargaḥ* (cf. SāṃKā 52). It appears that *liṅga* here stands for the internal and external organs and *bhāva* for all kinds of objects. Here *bhūtas* (beings) are not regarded as falling under creation.

It should be noted in this connection that *bhūtasarga* sometimes called *bhautika sarga* (SāṃKā 53), does not mean that beings (*bhūtas*) are really created like the creation of the organs or objects. A being (*jīva, prāṇin*) is a composite entity having two different kinds of aspects. One aspect is the immutable awareness (*Puruṣa* principle) which is beyond the act of creation on account of its transcending space and time; the other aspect consists of the *mahat* principle,

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the ego, the internal and external organs. This aggregate is associated with an external seat called body so that it becomes able to act in order to fulfil some purpose. This aspect is nothing but modifications of the three *guṇa*s having *Puruṣa* as the illuminating superintendent. This aspect has no beginnning and it exists in a most subtle form even in the state of dissolution, with the disposition of appearing in visible forms after the appearance of the cosmic egg (*brahmāṇḍa*). Creation of beings means their taking birth in different species.

These beings are usually divided into three major classes, *daiva* (8 sub-classes), *tiryagyoni* (5 sub-classes), *mānuṣya* (one class):

> अष्टविकल्पो दैवस्तैर्यग्योनश्च पञ्चधा भवति ।
> मानुष्यश्चैकविधः समासतो भौतिकः सर्गः ॥
>
> SāṃKā 53
>
> The divine (order) is of eight kinds, the sub-human creation is five-fold, the human order is one variety, such in brief, is the elemental creation. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

This Three-fold division is accepted in the Yoga school also: *tairyagyona-mānuṣa-daivatādīni* (cf. TaVai on YSū II.28). That the beings are of fourteen kinds is expressly stated in the **Tattvasamāsa-Sūtra** (20) as: *caturdaśavidho bhūtasargaḥ*.

There is no further creation of *tattva*s after the creation of the *bhūta*s. The *bhūta*s get mixed with one another and the stage called *bhautika* (or *sthūla bhūta*) comes into existence. Sometimes *pāñcabhautika* (made up of five *bhūta*s) is used for *bhautika*. The cosmic egg is not a *tattva*; it is made up of five *bhūta*s.

Sāṃkhya asserts that the three *guṇa*s are the ultimate material cause of all internal and external entities and the *Puruṣa* principle is the *hetu* (efficient cause) of the first evolute called *mahat* principle. The *mahat*, becomes conscious (*cetana*), on account of its association with *Puruṣa*, it is capable of creating organs and objects from its own form. All kinds of efficient cause fall under the *mahat* principle.

The **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** says that the creation is caused by the association of *Puruṣa* and *Prakṛti* (*tatkṛtaḥ sargaḥ*). This association at first brings about the *mahat* principle which gives rise to other *tattva*s. In the evolution of *mahat*, *Puruṣa* is the *hetu* the changeless efficient cause and *guṇa*s or *prakṛti* is the material cause. The **Yuktidīpikā** speaks of the *nimitta* (efficient cause) of three kinds of *sarga* as follows:

> प्रधानपुरुषयोर्हि भोक्तृ-भोग्य भावापेक्षनिमित्तः ... ।
>
> YuDīp on SāṃKā 21

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> The two ultimate causes *pradhāna* and *prakṛti* characterized by the relation of *bhogya* (capable of being enjoyed) and *bhoktṛ* (enjoyer) are the causes of creation.

This shows that creation which has no beginning, will continue so long as this relation exists.

This relation is not the real nature of the two ultimate principles. This relation falls under the field of *avidyā* which is said to be the cause of association of *Puruṣa* with the *buddhi* principle (*tasya heturavidyā* – YSū II.24) is also beginningless.

According to Sāṃkhya there is a definite order of creation. The expression *kramānativṛtteḥ* (YSūBh II.19) suggests that the order is invariable. The **Sāṃkhya-Sūtra** (II.10) also refers to a definite order in the act of creation (*mahadādikrameṇa pañcabhūtānām*).

Following passage throws light on the order of creation:

> प्रकृतेर्महांस्ततोऽहंकारस्तस्माद् गणश्च षोडशकः ।
> तस्मादपि षोडशकात् पञ्चभ्यः पञ्च भूतानि ॥
>
> SāṃKā 22

> From Primal Nature proceeds the Great One (intellect), thence individualism, thence the aggregate of the sixteen and from five out of these sixteen, the five gross elements. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

From the above it becomes clear that the first evolute of *prakṛti* (the equilibrium state of three *guṇa*s, constituents) is *mahat* (also called *asmitā* or the sixth *aviśeṣa*); a two-fold creation process from *ahaṃkāra*, viz. (i) five *tanmātra*s which are also called *aviśeṣa*s and sometimes *bhūtamātra* or rarely *bhūta*; and (ii) the internal organ mind with two kinds of external organs – sense organs and motor organs; from the *tanmātra*s proceed five *bhūta*s also called *viśeṣa*s. Thus the total number of evolutes comes to twenty three; all of these are regarded as *tattva*s.

Though Sāṃkhyan works speak of the creation of *tattva*s, beings and *bhāva*s (as stated above) yet they do not seem to speak of the creation of cosmic egg or mention its immediate causes. The words *ūrdhvam, madhye* and *mūlataḥ* and the expression *brahmādistambaparyanta* (SāṃKā 54) may reasonably be taken as referring to a cosmic egg. The **Vyāsabhāṣya** however, speaks of the cosmic egg as under:

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तदेतत् सर्वं सुप्रतिष्ठितसंस्थानम् अण्डमध्ये व्यूढम् । अण्डं च प्रधानस्याणुरवयवः ... ।

YSūBh III.26

Then, all this with well-formed shape abide in subtle form in the cosmic egg. The cosmic egg is a very small portion of the Primal Nature.

According to the Sāṃkhyan viewpoint a cosmic egg is made up of *bhūta*s in their mutually mixed state; *bhūta*s are gross forms of *tanmātra*s (rudimentary elements) which in turn are created by the *ahaṃkāra* (ego), precisely *tāmasa* part of *ahaṃkāra*, called *bhūtādi*. Thus it can be said that according to Sāṃkhya *ahaṃkāra* (ego), an internal entity, is the material cause of the external entity called *tanmātra*s.

Ahaṃkāra exists in every being and as such it should create *tanmātra*s. But it (*vyaṣṭi ahaṃkāra*) does not do so. Therefore *ahaṃkāra* of a particular kind is capable of creating *tanmātra*s which in turn produce the *bhūta*s and afterwards a cosmic egg is produced. It is quite logical to say that this *ahaṃkāra* possesses dominant powers along with other divine qualities. The divine being possessing this *ahaṃkāra* creates the cosmic egg by his will using *tāmasa ahaṃkāra* as material cause of *tanmātra*s, i.e. he objectifies *ahaṃkāra* and thus the objective world (*grāhya brahmāṇḍa*) appears.

It is needless to say that *ahaṃkāra* is preceded by the *mahat-tattva* which is invariably illuminated by *Puruṣa*. *Puruṣa* associated with the divine *ahaṃkāra* and *mahat-tattva* is called the Creator, *Īśvara* or Brahmā (*brahmādistamba paryantaḥ* – SāṃKā 54). He is called *māhātmyaśarīra* in the **Yuktidīpikā** (on SāṃKā 46). He is referred to by the words *pūrvasiddha* and *yatrakāmāvasāyin* (YSūBh II.45).

This Creator is mentioned in the **Sāṃkhya-Sūtra** as:

स हि सर्ववित् सर्वकर्ता ॥
ईदृशेश्वरसिद्धिः सिद्धा ॥

SāṃSū III.56–57

He, indeed, is omniscient and omnipotent, if God of this nature be proved, is thus proved.

To reply to this question we have to determine the entity in which agency (*kartṛtva*) combined with the power of thinking or deliberation lies, for such an entity only can have a purpose or intention or aim.

Now, since the *Puruṣa* principle is immutable and self-revealing, it has no concern with purpose or aim. *Prakṛti* (three *guṇa*s) too, being *acetana* or *jaḍa*

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(non-intelligent, unconscious) has nothing to do with purpose or aim though they have mutation, transformation and activity. Since the association of these two is not created by any being, (all beings are but assemblages of these two ultimate principles), the association has also no purpose behind it. This association has no beginning but it ceases when *avidyā* is destroyed by discriminative discernment (*vivekakhyāti*). Since this association gives rise to all *tattvas*, creation of *tattvas* is not dependent on the thought of any intelligent being because a being in itself is an assemblage of *tattvas*. In fact creation serves no purpose either for *Puruṣa* or for *prakṛti*.

Though creation has no purpose but as creation (i.e. created things) is used by the beings to fulfil some purpose, it can be the *artha* or *prayojana* of creation. In fact, it is the result of creation and not its purpose. The creator may not create to fulfil some definite purpose of his own or of the creatures but it is quite natural that a creature utilizes the creation (i.e. the created world) to serve his own purpose – mundane or spiritual and in this secondary sense only the creator may be said to have some purpose for his creation.

The **Sāṃkhya-Kārikā** throws some light on the question of purposeless activity of *prakṛti* saying that as non-intelligent milk comes out (from the udder of a cow) for the nourishment of the calf, so the non-intelligent *prakṛti* functions for the liberation of the *Puruṣa* principle:

वत्सविवृद्धिनिमित्तं क्षीरस्य यथा प्रवृत्तिरज्ञस्य ।
पुरुषविमोक्षनिमित्तं तथा प्रवृत्तिः प्रधानस्य ॥

SāṃKā 57

As non-intelligent milk functions for the nourishment of the calf, even so does primal Nature function for the liberation of the Spirit. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

It is to be carefully noted here that milk comes out from the udder of the cow according to some physiological cause; it however causes nourishment of a calf provided the calf drinks it. The milkman produces other kinds of results also if used in other ways. Thus it is quite reasonable to hold that nourishment is not the purpose but the effect or result of milk (when used in a particular way). The word *nimitta* in the above verse does not mean *kāraṇa* or *hetu*, but *phala*. *Nimitta* in the sense of *phala* is well known (cf. *nimittāt karmayoge* – Vārttika on Pā II.3.37). A *phala* is sometimes regarded as *hetu*, for *iṣṭasādhanatājñāna* (the notion that 'this is the means of my desired result') is regarded as *pravartaka* (impelling or instigating factor). It is to be further noted that in the above verse *pravṛtti* does not mean conscious activity or effort or inclination and the like; it means function, the act of mutating or transforming.

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Bhoga (experience of objects) and *apavarga* (ascertainment of *Puruṣa* which is followed by the closure of experience) are sometimes regarded as the two purposes of creation or of *Puruṣa*. That *bhoga* and *apavarga* are the *artha* or *prayojana* (of *Puruṣa*) is expressly stated in the **Yoga-Sūtra** (II.18) and the Bhāṣya thereon. As no purpose can reasonably be ascribed to *Puruṣa* who is untouched by ignorance, bondage and activity, this view is to be taken in the sense as shown above. Since *bhoga* and *apavarga* depend upon creation, for a being living in the created world becomes able to run on the path of *bhoga* or *apavarga* according to his intention or disposition, it is reasonable to hold that creation is helpful for a being. In this sense only creation may be said to have a purpose. As the *buddhi* is the seat of *bhoga* and *apavarga* and as *buddhi* is illuminated by *Puruṣa*, *bhoga* and *apavarga* are regarded as two *prayojana* or *arthas* of *Puruṣa*.

The creation of the cosmic egg from the divine *ahaṃkāra* of the creator is in accordance with the nature of the three *guṇas*. This *ahaṃkāra* is not liberated and possesses the latent impressions of *karmans* due to which creation takes place. Intelligent beings can use the world to attain *bhoga* or *apavarga*. When *apavarga* is fulfilled *buddhi* ceases to act and consequently release is realized.

The views propounded above are based on the following authoritative passages:

पुरुषस्यदर्शनार्थं कैवल्यार्थं तथा प्रधानस्य ।
... संयोगस्तत्कृतः सर्गः ॥

SāṃKā 21

For the purpose of Primal Nature being contemplated (as such) lay the spirit and for the release of the spirit, from this association creation proceeds. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

Since creation is for the sake of *Puruṣa*, these (evolutes of *prakṛti*) are not for their own sake.

Sarga is said to be an effect caused by the activity of the *guṇas* – *guṇapravṛttikāryo hi sargaḥ* (YuDīp on SāṃKā 24). Sāṃkhya observes that like the *pravṛtti* of the *guṇas* there is the *nivṛtti* of the *guṇas* also on account of which creation is checked and consequently the evolutes assume their causal form, i.e. they are destroyed. Following passages speak of the *nivṛtti* of the *guṇas*:

तेन निवृत्तप्रसवाम् ... प्रकृतिं पश्यति पुरुषः ... ॥

SāṃKā 65

Hereby does the pure spirit, resting like a spectator, perceive Primal

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Nature which has ceased to be productive. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

पुरुषस्य तथात्मानं प्रकाश्य विनिवर्तते प्रकृतिः ॥

SāṃKā 59cd

Prakṛti having exhibited herself to *Puruṣa* desists from further activity.

पुरुषार्थशून्यानां गुणानां प्रतिप्रसवः कैवल्यम् ... ॥

YSū IV.34

Isolation is the inverse generation or involution of the *guṇa*s that have become bereft of *puruṣārtha* (i.e. *bhoga* and *apavarga*).

विविक्तबोधात् सृष्टिनिवृत्तिः प्रधानस्य सूदवत् पाके ॥

SāṃSū III.63

On account of discriminative knowledge there is the cessation of creation caused by *prakṛti* as is the case of a cook when the cooking has been performed.

When this knowledge dawns the force of creation (i.e. the functions of *buddhi* etc.) gradually decays as the impelling causal factor for creation becomes absent.

सति संयोगेऽपि तयोः प्रयोजनं नास्ति सर्गस्य ॥

SāṃKā 66cd

Though there be conjuction of these, there is no prompting to (further) creation. (Tr. S.N. Sastri)

In this passage *prayojana* is used in the sense of *prayojaka*(impeller, inciter) and it would be wrong to take the word to indicate utility, use or purpose. *Prayojana* in this sense is used in the Vārttika as: *rakṣohāgamalaghvasandehāḥ prayojanam* (Paspaśāhnika of the Mahābhāṣya).

This *prayojana* (i.e. *prayojaka*) is the opposite to *vivekajñāna*. Since in this state *avidyā* gets dwindled, activities of *buddhi*, etc. are checked and gradually creation comes to a close.

One important point to be noted in this connection is that the Sāṃkhya says that *pradhāna* (primal constituent, i.e. *prakṛti*) has a tendency to both aspects, namely quiescence and activity; otherwise the primal constituent could not have been called *pradhāna*. And this line of argument is to be applied to other causal factors also that we think of.

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उभयथा चास्य प्रवृत्तिः प्रधानव्यवहारं लभते, नान्यथा ।

Pradhāna has the tendency to act in both the ways for which it is called *pradhāna* otherwise not.

As quiescence is as natural as activity, it can arise whenever favourable causal factor comes into operation; similar is the case with activity also.

The Yoga philosophy speaks of *sthiti-kāraṇa* as one of the nine causes (YSūBh II.28). From the example 'food is the *sthiti-kāraṇa* of the body' *sthiti* seems to mean 'steadiness, preservation'. This shows that *sthiti* is maintenance on account of which a thing, though changing, retains its identity:

उत्पादितस्य अन्येन स्थितिं कुरुते धात्रीकुमारवत् ।

YuDīp on SāṃKā 19

A being, after being born, maintains itself with the help of another as a child is nourished by the nurse. Thus the nature of *sthiti* is precisely known.

This passage further shows that the maintenance of a thing depends upon various factors. In the act of maintaining, a thing takes the help of those factors that may not give rise to it. The word *sthiti* in this sense is found in the passage defining *śeṣavṛtti* (one of the ten fundamental topics of Sāṃkhya) as '*sthitiḥ śarīrasya ca śeṣavṛtti*' quoted in the commentary the Tattvayāthārthya-dīpana on **Tattvasamāsa-Sūtra** – *daśa mūlikārthāḥ* (18). It explains the passage as:

जीवन्मुक्तस्य संस्कारमात्रेण चक्रभ्रमिवत् शरीरस्य या स्थितिः सा शेषवृत्तिः ।

The sustenance of the body of a *jīvanmukta* with the help of the power of his latent impressions is to be known as *śeṣavṛtti* (cf. *yad yasmājjāyate tasya tadāpūraṇenaiva sthitiḥ* – SāṃSā I.3).

So long as Prajāpati's *saṃkalpa* of creation lasts, the world continues to exist. As soon as the *saṃkalpa* is inhibited, the world gets destroyed. There is no sure means to measure the period between the creation and destruction of the world.

Pralaya (dissolution) also called *pratisañcāra* (TaSaSū 6) is one of the main topics of Sāṃkhya as is known from the passage "*sthityutpatti pralayāścintyante yatra bhūtānām*" (SāṃKā 69cd). The process of dissolution is to be understood according to the nature of *nāśa* (destruction) which is defined as *kāraṇa-laya* (SāṃSū I.121) – the resolution of an effect in its material cause. As for example,

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the resolution of a jar into the particles of clay which constituted the jar is called its destruction. The same view is stated by the Sāṃkhya teacher Devala:

> यो यस्मादुत्पद्यते स तस्मिन् लीयते इति वाप्ययक्रमः ।
>
> Quoted in Aparārka comm. on Yāj Sm III.109
>
> That which is born from a source gets dissolved there – this is the process of dissolution.

Thus it is clear that in Sāṃkhya *pralaya* or *laya* is not absolute destruction and that it has a definite order.

Like creation, dissolution is also a graded process. It begins with the *bhautika* or *pāñcabhautika* state and ends with the equilibrium state of three *guṇas* (constituents), *sattva, rajas* and *tamas* which do not get dissolved into subtler causes.

To be explicit, the *bhautika* entities (in which five *bhūtas* are mixed) get dissolved into five *bhūtas*; these turn into five *tanmātras* of the same class (e.g. the *pṛthivībhūta* into the *gandha-tanmātra*) and these again into ego (*ahaṃkāra*), precisely the *tāmasa* aspect of the ego called *bhūtādi*. The ego gets dissolved into the *mahat* principle, which is absorbed into the *prakṛti* (the state of equilibrium of the three *guṇas*). Similarly the eleven organs get dissolved into the ego.

What is the efficient cause of dissolution or destruction? The nature of efficient cause is determined according to the nature of the effect. The efficient cause may be external as well as internal. In the dissolution of the organs, ego and the I-sense (*mahat*) the will (*saṃkalpa*) of the *yogin* is the efficient cause. In the dissolution of the cosmic egg, the will of the Creator is the efficient cause.

Pralaya is used in a secondary sense also. The **Haṭhayoga Pradīpikā** (IV.10) reads '*prabuddhānāṃ mahāśakto prāṇaḥ śūnye pralīyate*' (*prāṇa* gets dissolved in *śūnya* (void) when the great power (*kuṇḍalinī*) is awakened). According to the commentary Jyotsnā, *pralaya* here means 'absence of activity' (*vyāpārābhāva*).

The followers of the Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system are, in fact, called realists or *ārambhavādins* 'those who believe in the creation as a new beginning'. An elaborate description of how the world comes into being from the atoms of the four great elements is given in the **Vaiśeṣika-Sūtra Bhāṣya**:

> इहेदानीं चतुर्णां महाभूतानां सृष्टिसंहारविधिरुच्यते । ब्राह्मेण मानेन वर्षशतान्ते वर्तमानस्य ब्रह्मणोऽपवर्गकाले संसारखिन्नानां सर्वप्राणिनां निशिविश्रामार्थं सकलभुवनपतेर्महेश्वरस्य संजिहीर्षासमकालं शरीरेन्द्रिय-

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महाभूतोपनिबन्धकानां सर्वात्मगतानामदृष्टानां वृत्तिनिरोधे सति महेश्वरेच्छात्माणुसंयोगजकर्मभ्यः शरीरेन्द्रियकारणाणुविभागेभ्यस्तत्संयोगनिवृत्तौ तेषामापरमाण्वन्तो विनाशः। तथापृथिव्युदकज्वलनपवनानामपि महाभूतानामनेनैव क्रमेणोत्तरस्मिन्ननुत्तरस्मिन् सति पूर्वस्य पूर्वस्य विनाशः। ततः प्रविभक्ताः परमाणवोऽवतिष्ठन्ते धर्माधर्मसंस्कारानुविद्धा आत्मानस्तावन्तमेव कालम्।

ततः पुनः प्राणिनां भोगभूतये महेश्वरसिसृक्षानन्तरं सर्वात्मगतवृत्तिलब्धादृष्टापेक्षेभ्यस्तत्संयोगेभ्यः पवनपरमाणुषु कर्मोत्पत्तौ तेषां पूर्वदिशा परस्परसंयोगेभ्यो द्व्यणुकादिक्रमेण महान् वायुः समुत्पन्नो नभसि दोधूयमानः तिष्ठति। तदनन्तरं तस्मिन्नेव वायावाप्येभ्यः परमाणुभ्यस्तेनैवक्रमेण महान् सलिलनिधिरुत्पन्नः पोप्लूयमानस्तिष्ठति। तदनन्तरं तस्मिन्नेव जलनिधौ पार्थिवेभ्यः परमाणुभ्यो द्व्यणुकादिप्रक्रमेण महापृथिवी समुत्पन्ना संहताऽवतिष्ठते। तदनन्तरं तस्मिन्नेव महोदधौ तैजसेभ्योऽणुभ्यो द्व्यणुकादिक्रमेणोत्पन्नो महांस्तेजोराशिः देदीप्यमानस्तिष्ठति।

एवं समुत्पन्नेषु चतुर्षु महाभूतेषु महेश्वरस्याभिध्यानमात्रात् तैजसेभ्योऽणुभ्यः पार्थिवपरमाणुसहितेभ्यो महदण्डमुत्पद्यते। तस्मिंश्चतुर्वदनकमलं सर्वलोकपितामहं ब्रह्माणं सकलभुवनसहितमुत्पाद्य प्रजासर्गे विनियुङ्क्ते। स च महेश्वरेण विनियुक्तो ब्रह्माऽतिशयज्ञानवैराग्यैश्वर्यसम्पन्नः प्राणिनां कर्मविपाकं विदित्वा कर्मानुरूपज्ञानभोगायुषः सुतान् प्रजापतीन् मानसान् मनुदेवर्षिपितृगणान् मुखबाहूरूपादतश्चतुरो वर्णानन्यानि चोच्चावचानि च सृष्ट्वाशयानुरूपैर्धर्मज्ञानवैराग्यैश्वर्यैः संयोजयति।

VaiśSūBh V (sṛṣṭi prakaraṇa)

We are now going to describe the process of the creation and destruction of the four ultimate Material Substances. When a hundred years, by the measure of Brahmā are at an end, there comes the time for the deliverance of the Brahmā existing at that time; and then for the sake of the resting at night, of all living beings wearied by their wanderings, there arises in the mind of the Supreme Lord, the Ruler of all worlds, a desire to reabsorb (all creation); and simultaneously with this desire, there comes about a cessation of the operations of the unseen potential tendencies of all souls that are the causes of their bodies, sense-organs and gross-elements. Then out of the Supreme Lord's desire and from the conjunction of the souls and the material atoms, there come about certain disruptions of the atoms constituting the Bodies and sense-organs. These disruptions destroy the combinations of those atoms; and this brings

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about the destruction of all things down to the atoms. (II.1.18, 19; V.2.1; VII.2.10)

Then there comes about a successive destruction or reabsorption of the ultimate Material Substances, Earth, Water, Fire and Air, one after the other. (V.2.1, 12; VII.2.10)

After this, the atoms remain by themselves in their isolated condition; and simultaneously with these there remain the souls permeated with the potencies of their past virtues and vices.

Then again, for the sake of the experiences to be gained by living beings, there arising in the mind of the Supreme Lord a desire for creation, there are produced, in the atoms of air, certain actions or motions, due to their conjunctions under the influence of the unseen potential tendencies that begin to operate in all souls. These motions bringing about the mutual contact of the air atoms, there appears, through the Diad, Triad, etc. finally the "Great Air", which exists vibrating in the sky. (V.2.12; VII.2.9; X.2.2)

After this, in this Great Air, there appears, in the same order, out of the atoms of water, the Great Reservoir of water, which remains there surging. (X.2.2; VII.2.9)

In this Reservoir of Water, there appears, out of the Earth-atoms, the Great Earth which rests there in its solid form. (V.2.1; X.2.2; VII.2.9)

Then, in the same Water-reservoir, there appears, in the same order, out of the Fire-atoms, the Great Mass of Fire; and not being suppressed by anything else, it stands shining radiantly.

The four gross elements having thus been brought-into existence, there is produced, from the mere thought (mental picturing) of the Supreme Lord, the Great Egg, from out of the Fire-atoms mixed up with the atoms of Earth; and in this egg having produced all the worlds and the Four-faced Brahmā, the Grand-father of all creatures; the Supreme Lord assigns to him the duty of producing the various creatures. Being thus engaged by the Supreme Lord, Brahmā, endowed with extreme degrees of knowledge, Dispassion and Power, having recognised the ripeness for fruition of the karmic tendencies of the living beings, creates out of his mind, his sons, the Prajāpatis, as also the Manus and the several groups of the Gods, Ṛṣis and Pitṛs, – and out of his mouth, arms, thighs and feet, the four castes, and the other living beings of all grades high and low, – all these having their knowledge and experience ordained in

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accordance with their previous deeds; and then he connects them with Virtue, Knowledge, Dispassion and Powers, according to their respective impressional potencies. (Tr. G.N. Jha)

According to Nyāya-Vaiśeṣika system creation and dissolution are concerned only with the four gross elements (*mahābhūta*) and not with *ākāśa* which is regarded as indestructible (*nitya*). Similarly the atoms (*paramāṇus*) of the four *bhūtas* are neither created nor destroyed. Similarly, the selves (*ātman*) and the mind (*manas*) are also *nitya*, whereas the sense-organs are effects (*kārya-dravya*) and they are said to be created from the atoms of the four *bhūtas* and *ākāśa*.

In the above Bhāṣya passage it is expressly declared that both have some purpose behind them, which lies in the Creator Lord (Maheśvara). While the purpose of creation is 'experience to be gained by the living beings' (*prāṇināṃ bhogabhūtaye*), that of dissolution is the 'resting of all living beings wearied by their wanderings (*saṃsārakhinnānāṃ prāṇināṃ viśrāmārtham*).

Maheśvara or more precisely His desire for creation (*maheśvarasisṛkṣā*) is said to be the efficient cause of creation, while His desire for destruction is the efficient cause of dissolution.

The ultimate material cause of all created things or effects (*kāryadravya*), viz. bodies, organs and objects, is the atoms. It is to be noted here that since the idea of *pariṇāma* (modification or transformation) is foreign to these two philosophies, it is better to use intimate (*samavāyin*) cause in the place of material cause to avoid confusion.

It should also be noted that the word *vilayana* in the sūtra '*apāṃ saṃghāto vilayanaṃ ca tejaḥ saṃyogāt*' (VaiśSū V.2.8) – 'condensation and dissolution of water are caused by the conjunction of fire' means dissolution.

The order of creation according to the above passage can be narrated as follows: By the desire of the great Lord there arise motions (*karman*) in the atoms of the four *bhūtas*. Those motions bring about mutual contact of the air atoms and binaries (*dvyaṇukas*) are produced. They in turn produce tertiaries (*tryaṇukas*) and in this way gradually gross (*mahān*) air comes into existence which exists vibrating. Then from the water-atoms, in the same process, gross water is produced which surges constantly. Then from the earth-atoms, in the same process, gross earth with its solid form is produced. After this out of fire-atoms gross fire is produced shining radiantly on account of not being suppressed by anything else (*kenacid anabhibhūtatvāt*).

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The commentary **Kandalī** remarks:

> यद्यपि पयः पावकयोः स्वाभाविको विरोधस्तथापि अदृष्टवशेनाधाराधेयभावो नानुपपन्नः ।
>
> Nyāyakandalī ch. V, sṛṣṭikrama (Mahābhūta)
>
> Though water and fire are opposite in character (one is cold and the other is hot), yet their relation of 'container and contained' is not untenable.

After the production of these four gross elements there appears the cosmic egg (*mahadaṇḍam*) from out of the fire atoms. This is said to be caused by the *abhidhyāna* (desire) of the great Lord.

The order of dissolution is as follows. With the rise of desire of the Supreme Lord for destruction, the cessation of the operations of the *adṛṣṭas* in all selves comes about. Then there come about certain disruptions of the ạtoms constituting the bodies and the sense organs. These disruptions destroy the conjunction of the atoms and this brings about the destruction of all things.

Again, there comes about a successive destruction of the ultimate material substances, viz. earth, water, fire and air one after the other, i.e. the earth gets destroyed while water exists; water gets destroyed while fire exists and so on.

The Bhāṣya adds that after this stage the atoms remain in isolated condition. In the state of dissolution only *diś, kāla*, and *ākāśa* exist.

In the above description of creation and dissolution two divine beings are mentioned, viz. Maheśvara (the Supreme Lord) and Brahmā. The will of Maheśvara has been stated in connection with creation and dissolution. He creates Brahmā after the creation of the cosmic egg (*mahad aṇḍam*), which follows the creation of the four gross elements.

Brahmā endowed with highly perfected knowledge, dispassion and power is assigned, by Maheśvara, the duty of producing various kinds of creatures. Having cognized the ripeness for fruition of the kārmic tendencies of the beings, Brahmā creates Prajāpati, Manus, Ṛṣis, Pitṛs out of his mind and the four castes out of his four limbs (mouth etc.) and other living beings. He endows all these beings with virtue, knowledge, dispassion and power according to their comparative merits.

The Bhāṣya further makes it clear that when a hundred years by the measure of Brahmā are over (*brāhmeṇa mānena varṣaśatānte vartamānasya brahmaṇaḥ*) there appears dissolution. This shows that the length of the period in which the created world lasts. A similar length of period is ascribed to dissolution also (*tataḥ pravibhaktāḥ paramāṇavaḥ... tāvantameva kālam*).

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The destruction or disintegration of the binary particle (*dvyaṇuka*) is due to the destruction of the non-inherent (*asamavāyin*) cause (i.e., conjunction) and the destruction of tertiary particle (*tryaṇuka*) is due to the destruction of the inherent (*samavāyin*) cause (i.e., the diads). Some however accept the destruction of the non-inherent cause as the cause of both.

Dissolution is said to be of two kinds: *avāntara* (interim) dissolution in which all effect-substances (*kārya-dravya*) are destroyed and *mahāpralaya* (great dissolution) in which all positive effects (*bhāvakārya*) are dissolved. In *mahāpralaya* atoms remain without any of their perishable qualities.

The above views on creation and dissolution held by the Vaiśeṣikas are accepted by the Nyāya school also.

One important view is to be noted in this connection. The attributes of God are eternal (*nitya*). His *icchā* (will), though connected with creation, and dissolution, yet it does not have any rise and fall, like an ordinary will, rather it is a will to be (*bhavatu*).

While replying to the question what would be the seat of *jāti* (universal) which is *nitya* and as such must exist (somewhere) if the whole cosmic egg gets destroyed, Bhāsarvajña in his auto-commentary **Nyāyabhūṣaṇa** on **Nyāya Sāra** (Varanasi edition, 1968, p. 270) replies that since all of the innumerable cosmic elements cannot be destroyed simultaneously, individuals will exist in some cosmic eggs and they would be the seats of universal (*jāti*):

> ननु पुराणादिषु प्रलयो महाप्रलयश्च श्रूयते, सत्यम्, किन्तु लोकत्रयविनाशः प्रलयः, सहाण्डेन चतुर्दशस्थानविनाशो महाप्रलयः । सर्वाण्डानां तु युगपन्न विनाशः, तेन अण्डान्तरेषु घटादयः सन्ति ।
>
> Though in Purāṇas dissolution and great dissolution are heard, yet it is true that dissolution means the destruction of three worlds. But *mahāpralaya* means the destruction of fourteen spheres along with the cosmic egg. All the cosmic eggs do not have an end simultaneously. Therefore, in other cosmic eggs existence of jars may be tenable.

According to the Vaiśeṣika theory the mind is described as *pralīna* when it retires motionlessly into the heart–the organless region of the self (*antarhṛdaye nirindriye ātmapradeśo niścalaṃ manastiṣṭhati tadā pralīnamanaska ityākhyāyate* – VaiśSūBh p. 438). Since, according to the Vaiśeṣika philosophy the *manas* is *nitya*, it cannot get destroyed or dissolved and as such *pralaya* (or *laya*) must mean 'remaining without any activity or motion' (cf. *uparatendriyagrāmasya pralīnamanaskasya...* VaiśSūBh pp. 436–437).

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In the later philosophical system like Advaita Vedānta, the Upanisadic *Brahman* is upheld as the Reality, the source of *sṛṣṭi*, *sthiti* and *saṃhāra*.

जन्माद्यस्य यतः ॥

BrSū I.1.2

(*Brahman* is that) from which the origin etc. (i.e. the origin, subsistence, and dissolution) of this (world proceed). (Tr. G. Thibaut)

Brahman is both, the material and the efficient cause of the universe according to Śaṅkara's interpretation of the following *sūtra*:

प्रकृतिश्च प्रतिज्ञादृष्टान्तानुपरोधात् ॥

BrSū I.4.23

(*Brahman* should be understood as) the material cause and (the efficient cause), otherwise the scriptural statements and illustrations cannot be justified.

Śaṅkara comments:

प्रकृतिश्चोपादानकारणं च ब्रह्माभ्युपगन्तव्यं निमित्तकारणं च ।

Brahman should be understood as both *prakṛti*, i.e., material cause and efficient cause.

The *Brahman* itself is called *Puruṣa* or *Īśvara* when it functions as the source of the universe.

Although the highest reality is thus described as the material cause of the world, the creation is described by the Vedāntins as an appearance, a manifestation of that which already exists.

प्रभवः सर्वभावानां सतामिति विनिश्चयः ।
सर्वं जनयति प्राणश्चेतोंऽशून् पुरुषः पृथक् ॥
विभूतिं प्रसवं त्वन्ये मन्यन्ते सृष्टिचिन्तकाः ।
स्वप्नमायासरूपेति सृष्टिरन्यैर्विकल्पिता ॥

MāṇḍKā I.6–7

It is thoroughly established that the coming into effect can be predicated only of all positive entities that exist. The *Prāṇa* manifests all; the *Puruṣa* creates the conscious beings (the *Jīva*s) in their manifold form separately.

Those who think of (the process of) creation believe it to be the manifestation of the superhuman power of God; while others look

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upon it as of the same nature as dream and illusion.
(Tr. Nikhilananda)

The same idea of creation as manifestation is explained with an analogy of rolling and unrolling of a picture-canvas.

जगद्योनिर्भवेदेष प्रभवाप्ययकृत्त्वतः ।
आविर्भावतिरोभावावुत्पत्तिप्रलयौ मतौ ॥
आविर्भावयति स्वस्मिन्विलीनं सकलं जगत् ।
प्राणिकर्मवशादेष पटो यद्वत्प्रसारितः ॥
पुनस्तिरोभावयति स्वात्मन्येवाखिलं जगत् ।
प्राणिकर्मक्षयवशात्संकोचितपटो यथा ॥

Pañcad VI.182–184

The Lord is said to be the source of the universe, for He causes the creation and dissolution of the world. By creation and dissolution are meant the manifestation and demanifestation of the world.

The world remains potential as impression in the Lord, and He causes its manifestation in accordance with the past deeds of beings. Creation is like the unrolling of a painted canvas.

If the painted canvas is rolled up, the picture is no longer visible. In the same way, when the Karma of beings is exhausted, the Lord withdraws into Himself the universe with all that it contains (i.e., all remain in a latent form). (Tr. Swahananda)

To the question why does *Brahman* create the world? The reply according to the views of different thinkers are summed up in the following verses:

इच्छामात्रं प्रभोः सृष्टिरिति सृष्टौ विनिश्चिताः।
कालात्प्रसूतिं भूतानां मन्यन्ते कालचिन्तकाः ॥
भोगार्थं सृष्टिरित्यन्ये क्रीडार्थमिति चापरे ।
देवस्यैष स्वभावोऽयमाप्तकामस्य का स्पृहा ॥

MāṇḍKā I.8–9

Those who affirm (the existence of the created objects), attribute this manifestation to the mere will of God, while those who look upon time as real declare time to be the manifestor of all beings.

Others think that the manifestation is for the purpose of enjoyment (of God) while still others attribute it to mere diversion (on the part of God). But it is the very nature of the Effulgent Being (*Ātman*) (for), what other desire is possible for Him whose desire is always in the state of fulfilment? (Tr. Nikhilananda)

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The Lord creates this world by mere volition.

यथा देवादयः स्वे-स्वे लोके सङ्कल्पमात्रेण स्वापेक्षितानि सृजन्ति, तथासौ पुरुषोत्तमः कृत्स्नं जगत् सङ्कल्पमात्रेण सृजति ।

ŚrīBh on BrSū II.1.25

As the gods and similar exalted beings create, each in his own world, whatever they require by their mere volition, so the Supreme Person creates by his mere volition the entire world. (Tr. G. Thibaut)

Śaṅkara stresses the unreal character of the creation and compares it to the world in dream or to a magic played by a magician.

लोकेऽपि देवादिषु मायाव्यादिषु च स्वरूपानुपमर्देनैव विचित्रा हस्त्यश्वादि-सृष्टयो दृश्यन्ते ।

ŚBh on BrSū II.1.28

In the world also it is seen in the case of gods, as also jugglers and others that various kinds of creation of elephants and so on take place, without any destruction of their nature. (Tr. Gambhirananda)

What then is the relation between the real *Brahman* and the unreal creation? It is described by offering analogies of earth, sparks etc., as in the following verse:

मृल्लोहविस्फुलिङ्गाद्यैः सृष्टिर्या चोदिताऽन्यथा ।
उपायः सोऽवताराय नास्ति भेदः कथञ्चन ॥

MāṇḍKā III.15

(The scriptural statements regarding) creation as illustrated by examples of earth, iron, sparks, etc., or otherwise, (only) serve the purpose of (ultimately) explaining the unity (of *Jīva* and *Brahman*). (Really speaking) differentiation does not exist in any manner. (Tr. Nikhilananda)

The process of creation is described in the later works like the **Vedāntasāra** as:

तमःप्रधानविक्षेपशक्तिमदज्ञानोपहितचैतन्यादाकाश आकाशाद्वायुर्वायोः अग्निरग्नेरापोऽद्भ्यः पृथिवी चोत्पद्यते । "एतस्मादात्मन आकाशः सम्भूतः" (TUp II.1.1) इत्यादिश्रुतेः । तेषु जाड्याधिक्यदर्शनात्तमः प्राधान्यं तत्-कारणस्य । तदानीं सत्त्वरजस्तमांसि कारणगुणप्रक्रमेण तेष्वाकाशादिषु-

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उत्पद्यन्ते । एतान्येव सूक्ष्मभूतानि तन्मात्राण्यपञ्चीकृतानि चोच्यन्ते । एतेभ्यः सूक्ष्मशरीराणि स्थूलभूतानि चोत्पद्यन्ते ॥

VedSā 57–60

From Consciousness associated with the projecting power of ignorance which has a preponderance of the quality of darkness, has evolved *Ākāśa* which, in its turn, has produced air, from air has come fire, from fire water, and from water earth. As in such Śruti passages, "From this Self has evolved *Ākāśa*" (TUp II.1.1). On account of the preponderance of inertia observed in them, their cause also must have an excess of the quality of darkness (*Tamas*). At that time the qualities of *Sattva, Rajas*, and *Tamas* are reproduced in ether etc., in accordance with the law that the qualities of the cause determine the qualities of the effect. These are called subtle matter, rudimentary elements (*Tanmātras*) and uncompounded (*Apañcīkṛta*) elements. From these subtle elements are produced subtle bodies and gross elements. (Tr. Nikhilananda)

To sum up: The Vedānta system upholds the Upanisadic theory of *Brahman* as the source of all creation. The *Brahman* as the creator is called *Puruṣa* or *Īśvara*. The creation is unreal while *Brahman*, the pure consciousness is the only reality. The creation is, thus, a mere appearance. There is no purpose behind the creation other than the very nature (*svabhāva*) of the creator.

The Vedantic concept of creation is reflected in many other domains of knowledge. In the Āyurveda for instance, the highest reality *Ātman*, is regarded as the source of the world which rotates in a cycle of the three states.

यथा – प्रलयात्यये सिसृक्षुर्भूतान्यक्षरभूत आत्मा सत्त्वोपादानः पूर्वतरमाकाशं सृजति, ततः क्रमेण व्यक्ततरगुणान् धातून् वाय्वादिकांश्चतुरः ... ।

CarSamŚāSthā IV.8

As the undecaying self with desire to create the beings at the end of the final destruction (of creation) creates, with the psyche as instrument, first of all, *ākāśa* thereafter gradually the other four elements *vāyu* etc. having more manifest qualities. (Tr. P.V. Sharma)

Bhartṛhari explains *sṛṣṭi* thus:

गुणा इत्येव बुद्धेर्वा निमित्तत्वं स्थितिर्मता ।
स्थितेश्च सर्वलिङ्गानां सर्वनामत्वमुच्यते ॥

उत्पत्तिः प्रसवोऽन्येषां नाशः संस्त्यानमित्यपि ।
आत्मरूपं तु भावानां स्थितिरित्यपदिश्यते ॥

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प्रवृत्तिरिति सामान्यं लक्षणं तस्य कथ्यते ।
आविर्भावस्तिरोभावः स्थितिश्चेत्यथ भिद्यते ॥

Vāk III.13.18, 27; 14.321

Or what is called *sthiti* is that thing by virtue of which the *guṇa*s are recognised as *guṇa*s and it is the common name of the other two genders.

According to some, birth is *prasava*, death is *saṃstyāna* and the existence of things in their own form is *sthiti*.

The general characteristic of gender is said to be activity (*pravṛtti*) and it is diversified into appearance, disappearance and stay. (Tr. K.A.S. Iyer)

Buddhism

Abhidharma Kośa, the basic text of Buddhism, refers to *sṛṣṭi* and so on very briefly and deals these concepts with perfect insight. Emergence, arising of thought is *jāti*, the beginning of the series. Thus it explains the above concepts in the following manner:

जातिरादिः प्रवाहस्य व्ययश्छेदः स्थितिस्तु सः ।
स्थित्यन्यथात्वं तस्यैव पूर्वापरविशिष्टता ॥
जातिरपूर्वो भावः स्थितिः प्रबन्धो व्ययस्तदुच्छेदः ।
स्थित्यन्यथात्वमिष्टं प्रबन्धपूर्वापरविशेष इति ॥

AbhidhKoBh II.46

Arising is the beginning of the series, disappearance is its rupture; duration is the series itself; evolution is the difference between its successive states.

And again,

Arising is existence following upon non-existence; duration is the series; impermanence is the rupture of all the series; and evolution is supposed to be the difference between the successive states of the series. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

While impermanence being the basic concept of Buddhism *sthiti* and others denote differently.

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स्थित्यादयोऽपि च युगपत् कारित्रे वर्त्तमाना एकक्षण एव धर्मस्य स्थितजीर्णविनष्टतां प्रसञ्जेयुः । यदैव ह्येनं स्थितिः स्थापयति तदैव जरा जरयति अनित्यता विनाशयतीति । किमयं तत्र काले तिष्ठतु आहोस्विज्जीर्यतु विनश्यतु वा ... ।

AbhidhKoBh II.46

And either the activity of the other characteristics is exercised simultaneously, or their activity is exercised in succession. In the first hypothesis, whereas duration makes a *dharma* last, old age makes it age and impermanence destroys it: the *dharma* lasts, ages and perishes at the same time. (Tr. L.M. Pruden)

अचलाभावेन आरम्मणे तिट्ठती ति ठिति ।

Aṭṭha III.281

It stands unshaken in the object; this is stability.
(Tr. Pe Maung Tin)

Jainism

According to Jaina doctrine, creation is the composition of the world (*loka*) which is one and limited. This world (*loka*) is composed of five masses of existence, viz. space (*ākāśa*), impulse (*dharma*), hindrance (*adharma*), soul (*jīva*) and matter (*pudgala*). Out of them *jīva* is sentient and others are insentient. Space is the substratum (*ādhāra*) and the other forms are sustained (*ādheya*). This world is threefold and depicted as *lokapuruṣa*: *adholoka, madhyaloka* and *ūrdhvaloka*. The conception of *lokapuruṣa* represents the cosmos comprising the whole world in the form of an anthropomorphic standing figure (Kalātattvakośa Vol. II, cf. Loka, Fig. 1).

The concept of *sthiti* is thought of by Jaina thinkers as the smallest duration of time taken by an atom of matter in passing from one point of space to the next, while the longest duration is eternity which is only conceived by liberated souls. Right consideration of any principle can be achieved by means of six different ways among which the one is *sthiti* 'duration'.

निर्देश स्वामित्व साधनाऽधिकरण स्थिति विधानतः ॥

TaSū I.7

Adhigama is attained by (considering a principle, or any substance with reference to its) *nirdeśa* (description, definition), *svāmitva* (possession, inherence), *sādhana* (cause), *adhikaraṇa* (place), *sthiti* (duration), and *vidhāna* (division). (Tr. J.L. Jaini)

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Tantra-Āgama

The Tantra explains creation, maintenance and dissolution widely. Some scholars hold the view that creation starts from the Lord, associated with *kalā*, i.e. *śakti* as in:

सच्चिदानन्दविभवात् सकलात् परमेश्वरात् ।
आसीच्छक्तिस्ततो नादो नादाद्बिन्दुसमुद्भवः ॥
परशक्तिमयः साक्षात्त्रिधाऽसौ भिद्यते पुनः ।
बिन्दुर्नादो बीजमिति तस्य भेदाः समीरिताः ॥
बिन्दुःशिवात्मको बीजं शक्तिर्नादस्तयोर्मिथः ।
समवायः समाख्यातः सर्वागमविशारदैः ॥
रौद्री बिन्दोस्ततो नादाज्ज्येष्ठा बीजादजायत ।
वामाताभ्यः समुत्पन्ना रुद्रब्रह्मरमाधिपाः ॥
संज्ञानेच्छाक्रियात्मानो वह्नीन्द्वर्कस्वरूपिणः ।
भिद्यमानात् पराद्बिन्दोरव्यक्तात्मा रवोऽभवत् ॥
शब्दब्रह्मेति तं प्राहुः सर्वागमविशारदाः ।

ŚāTil I.7–12ab

From Lord who is the glorified unity of being, consciousness and bliss is ever united with *śakti*. First emergence of *śakti* occurred from which *nāda*, the primal sound becomes manifest and from *nāda*, *bindu* emerges. The Lord, is fully permeated by *śakti* but again it (*śakti*) transforms itself in threefold way which is known as *bindu*, *nāda* and *bīja*. *Bindu* is of the nature of Śiva, while *bīja* the seed is *śakti* itself and *nāda* is known to be the union of both. It is considered by the knower of all Āgamas. Then from *bindu* appears *raudrī*, from *nāda*, *jyeṣṭhā* is born and from *bīja* is born *vāmā* and from them emerge *Rudra, Brahmā* and *Viṣṇu* and they are of the characteristics of *icchā* 'will', *kriyā* 'activity' and *jñāna* 'knowledge'. The Supreme *bindu* when being agitated the unmanifest sound (*rava*) becomes manifest. The knower of all Āgamas call it *śabdabrahman.*

The entire universe consisting of movable and immovable entities is made of *śabda* 'word' and *artha* 'the object' indicated by the sound as stated in the benedictory verse of the **Śāradā-Tilaka**. This sound or the speech is not an insentient dull object but is consciousness itself by which everything is permeated. The very body of the Lord eternally blissful by nature, is ever engaged in manifesting fifty syllabic sounds by which He pervades the whole universe by adopting a sequence. It is called *śabdabrahman* by the wise implying inner consciousness. This consciousness is further stated to be the Lord of speech.

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The Lord is stated here having a body which is none other than *śakti* which is invariably associated with Him in the form of bliss for creating the world of word and meaning. The same concept has been elaborated by Bhartṛhari in the famous verse of **Vākyapadīya** (I.123).

The Lord is known as *pati* and the implication of the term *pati* is given in the following way:

शासनरोधनपालनपाचनयोगात्स सर्वमुपकुरुते ।
तेन पतिः श्रेयोमयः एव शिवो नाशिवं किमपि तत्र ॥

TĀl I.104

He bestows good to all by means of giving instructions (to disciples) and by the use of His power of restraining He places the souls in the worldly existence and thus keeps them there in order that their deeds may get ripe. Therefore the Lord is indeed made of all good, the most auspicious. There is no inauspiciousness in that.

The above verse hints at the functions of Śiva. The **Mṛgendra Āgama** throws enough light on the functions of the Lord thus:

स्वापेऽप्यास्ते बोधयन्बोधयोग्यान्
रोध्यान्रुन्धन्पाचयन्कर्मिकर्म ।
मायाशक्तीर्व्यक्तियोग्याः प्रकुर्वन्
सर्वं पश्यन् यद्यथावस्तुजातम् ॥

MṛĀ I.4.15

Even during the great slumber the Lord remains engaged and rouses those who are fit to be roused, restrains those who are to be restrained and going on getting the deeds ripe of those who are engaged in performing right deeds and causing the veiling energies manifest which are worthy to become manifest. He sees the host of objects rightly.

This verse indicates three of the functions of Lord. These functions are creation, maintenance and dissolution which are known to be the *kṛtya* of the Lord.

The **Netra Tantra** alludes to this saying that the Lord is stated to be omnipotent. His potency is nothing but His power inseparably associated with Him. It is rather to be stated that one aspect of the Lord is devoid of activity, that is, lacking pulsation (*niṣpanda*), while the other is ever vibrative in pulsation which is known to be His *śakti*, energy. Because of ever presence of *śakti*

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He is called *sarvaśaktimān*, possessed of all powers which make Him capable of doing everything. Therefore the Tantra states:

यत्तस्य सर्वशक्तित्वं सा शक्तिरूपचर्यते ।
तया तु कुरुते सृष्टिं स्थितिं संहृतिमेव च ॥
करोति भगवान्सर्वं तिरोभावमनुग्रहम् ।

NT XXI.42–43ab

The capability of doing everything with reference to Him, is secondarily, called *śakti*. In association with her (*śakti*) He is responsible for creation, maintenance and dissolution. The Lord does everything like veiling and bestowing grace.

The Lord does everything by means of *śakti* which is inseparably associated with Him (*svāvyatiriktatayā śaktyā sarvaṃ karoti*). This is a general statement but when we see the matter specifically we find the answer thus:

क्रियाशक्त्या तु सृजति ज्ञानशक्त्या जगत्स्थितिम् ॥
संहारं रुद्रशक्त्या तु तिरोभावं तु वामया ।
अनुग्रहं ज्येष्ठया तु कुरुते नात्र संशयः ॥

NT XXI.43cd–44

He creates by means of *kriyāśakti*, the energy of activity and maintains continuation of the World by means of *jñānaśakti*, the energy of knowledge and dissolution by means of *rudraśakti*, the energy of driving away evils; veiling by means of *vāmā* and bestowal of grace by means of *jyeṣṭhā*. There is no doubt about it.

The Lord is one and everything that shines is essentially non-different from Him. As *Śiva* has been seen in two aspects, viz. *Śiva* and *Śakti*, taking these two as the highest knowing subject but with reference to the souls who are considered to be recipient of grace from the Lord and have attained liberation in accordance with reference to their comparative excellence may remain active in a certain sphere and perform deeds by being impelled by the will of the Lord. Therefore such souls come under the category of *Ātman*.

शिवः शक्तिस्तथात्मा च त्रितत्त्वं चेत्यनुत्तमम् ॥

NT XXI.47cd

Śiva, Śakti and *Ātman* are the three excellent principles.

Thus being threefold in essence He creates manifold creations:

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त्रिस्वरूपस्तथा देवो रुद्रो विष्णुः पितामहः ।
करोति षड्विधां सृष्टिं चतुर्भेदविभेदिताम् ॥
प्रेतनारकतिर्यञ्च सदेवमुनिमानुषम् ।
जरायुजाण्डजं देवि तथा संस्वेदजोद्भिजम् ॥

NT XXI.48–49

The Lord with threefold character having assumed three forms of Rudra, Viṣṇu and Brahmā does sixfold creation with fourfold divisions. The six are: spirit of the dead, the beings in the nether world, animals, gods, seers and men. The beings born of the embryo, born of egg, sweat-produced and trees and plants born of the soil.

The Lord is said to be the efficient cause:

निमित्तकारणं देवो यथा सूर्यो मणेः क्रिया ॥
उपादानं तु सा शक्तिः संक्षुब्धा समवायतः ।

NT XXI.50cd–51ab

The Lord is the efficient cause just as the sun is the cause of fire in the crystal but the material cause is that *śakti* which remains in perfect equilibrium with Śiva. She being agitated gives birth to the world.

When the equilibrium (*sāmarasya*) is broken the *śakti* undergoes a state of certain swollenness which in the language of Tantra is called *samanā*, fit to give birth to the universe.

After manifesting *samanā* the Lord manifests the universe thus:

तत्रारूढस्तु कुरुते शिवः परमकारणम् ॥
सृष्टिस्थितिसमाहारं तिरोभावमनुग्रहम् ।
हेतुकर्ता महेशानः सर्वकारणकारणम् ॥
समना नाम या शक्तिः सा तस्य करणं स्मृतम् ।
तयाधितिष्ठेद्देवेशो ह्यधःकारणपञ्चकम् ॥

SvT X.1258cd–1260

Śiva, the supreme cause, having taken recourse to *śakti*, performs the functions of creation, maintenance, withdrawal, veiling and bestowing grace. Śiva, the cause of all causes is the efficient cause and *śakti* called *samanā* is known to be His instrument. The group of five agents functioning in the lower levels are superintended by her (*śakti*).

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This *samanā*, where slight trace of the mind still persists it can only be conceived by the *yogin* who is proceeding to his spiritual journey. The subtle process of creation is explained in the following way:

अस्तित्वमात्रमात्मानं क्षोभ्यं क्षोभयते सदा ॥
समनासौ विनिर्दिष्टा शक्तिः सर्वाध्ववर्तिनी ।
क्रोडीकरोति या विश्वं संहृत्य सृजते पुनः ॥

NT XXI.60cd–61

The *śakti* (on its outgoing process of creation first) shines forth as merely being. It divides itself as if into two – the one is to be agitated (*kṣobhya*) and the other the agent which agitates itself continuously. It is known as *samanā*. This *śakti* abides in all the paths (*adhvan*) and it is she who embracing the entire universe and dissolving it within creates again and again.

The first stage of outgoing process of creation is *samanā* characterised by light in the form of great Being (*mahāsattā*). On its base shines forth the one that is to be agitated and the other which performs the act of agitation. Both are the same. In this process a great void appears like a big screen on which everything beginning from the void and ending in the earth is stringed together like a garland free from thought element and thinking process. For this reason it is called *samanā* where the trace of mind still persists. The meaning of keeping everything in its embrace is that it dissolves everything within and on its outgoing process of unfoldment manifestation of the void occurs first and later on it all shines as 'this' (*idam*). The term '*saṃhṛtya*' (after dissolving) in the verse indicates the state *vyāpinī* which is the state of *śūnyātiśūnya bhūḥ* – the void par excellence, while the term *sṛjati* 'creates', indicates the stage of *śakti*. It is to be noted here that beyond *samanā*, another state is conceived known to be *unmanā*. It is the supreme will of the Lord who keeps within all the *bhāvas* and *abhāvas* as in a seed, while *samanā, vyāpinī* and *śakti*, these three become manifest in close sequence characterised by generic manifestation of being and non-being (*bhāvābhāvasāmānyāvasānātmā*). Then onward that very *śakti* with the desire to manifest the universe shines in the form of indicated meaning (*vācya*) and indicating speech (*vācaka*) keeping on the one hand the vibrative sound of the signified object within (*vācyaspanda*) and on the other vibrates as the generic sound in the form of signifying agent (*vācakanādarūpatayā*) of *nāda*. In this way the creative sport of the Lord in the sphere of sound as the agent and its object goes on till it reaches *ardhacandra*, the half-moon in the centre of which shines *bindu* characterised by awareness of all shining identically one with it (*samastavācyābhedavedanātmā*). This state known to the one who is desirous of ascending upward, is the state of *saṃhāra* but to those who are descend-

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ing are in the process of creation: *saṃhāraḥ sarvabhūtānāṃ sṛṣṭikāraṇameva ca* (NT XXI.67).

In another way *sṛṣṭi* and *saṃhāra* have been defined with reference to *japa*, the repetition of a *mantra*:

जपः प्राणसमः कार्यः दिनस्थो मुक्तिकाङ्क्षिभिः ।
संहारः स तु विज्ञेयः शिवधामफलप्रदः ॥
व्योम्नि प्राप्तो यदा नादः पुनरेव निवर्तते ।
शर्वरी सा तु विज्ञेया हृदब्जं यावदागतः ॥
सृष्टिरेषा समाख्याता सर्वसिद्धिफलोदया ।

SvT II.140–142ab

Steadying in the day those who are desirous of liberation, the *japa* of the *mantra* should be done keeping it equibalanced with the vibration of *prāṇa* flowing along the middle path. It is technically called *saṃhāra* which is the bestower of the fruit of glorious realm of Śiva.

When *nāda* after reaching the state of *vyoman* technically called the end of the twelve, recedes again and comes back to the lotus of the heart it is known as the night. This is called creation which is the giver of all attainments.

Thus it is clear that creation and dissolution in the language of Tantra is something different from the common view but it is interesting to note that the primal sound known as *nāda* when becomes slightly condensed predominantly in the sphere of *paśyantī*, it assumes the form of *praṇava*. The later creation proceeds from the final syllable, the constituent known as *a*. It gives rise to the group of eight and fifty syllables known as *mātṛkā* which stand as the *vācaka* of all categories from Śiva to the earth.

Sṛṣṭi, sthiti and *saṃhāra* have been explained by Śrī Abhinavagupta in the following way: *saṃhāra* is the state when all the objects of knowledge projected as if separate from the self is withdrawn (*upasaṃhṛta prameyajātam*). This *bhinnaprameya prasara* occurs in two different ways, the one is creation and the other is the continuation of the series (*utpattiḥsantānaśca* – cf. ĪPraVim III.2.1).

Creation (*sṛṣṭi*) and so on are viewed yet in another way. Creation normally is of two types: the one is that which has been created by the Lord, *aiśī*. It is *sādhāraṇī* 'common to all' and the other is *pāśavī* – created by the limited soul which is known as *asādhāraṇī* 'individual', known only by the person who has created it.

The **Mālinīvijaya Tantra**, a basic text of Kashmir Śaivism, states that

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Śakti, the power of Lord, remains inseparably united with Him but when He desires to create, she takes the form of will (*icchā*):

या सा शक्तिर्जगद्धातुः कथिता समवायिनी ।
इच्छात्वं तस्य सा देवि सिसृक्षोः प्रतिपद्यते ॥
सैकापि सत्यनेकत्वं यथा गच्छति तच्छृणु ।
एवमेतदिति ज्ञेयं नान्यथेति सुनिश्चितम् ॥
ज्ञापयन्ती जगत्यत्र ज्ञानशक्तिर्निगद्यते ।
एवम्भूतमिदं वस्तु भवत्विति यदा पुनः ॥
जाता तदैव तत्तद्वत् कुर्वत्यत्र क्रियोच्यते ।

MvT III.5–8ab

The *Śakti* belonging to the creator of the universe is stated to be inseparable. O goddess, when He becomes desirous to create, that very *Śakti* assumes the form of will. Though she is one, listen, how she assumes multifariousness. This is of this nature not something else when this is known with certainty, the power which causes this in this world, is called the power of knowledge. Then again when let the object with this nature be born and is born at that moment and creates accordingly is called *kriyā*.

Will, knowledge and activity – these three are the basic elements which function at the background of creation.

Now the question arises why the Lord creates. In reply it has been stated in the **Mālinīvijaya Tantra** that the Lord, though partless (*niṣkala*) becomes *sakala*, associated with *kalā, śakti* and being desirous of creation and impelled by His will roused eight *vijñānākala* souls from slumber and appointed them with the prerogative of creation, maintenance, dissolution and showering grace. The souls who have not yet attained liberation, are called *sakala* souls. They remain as if in slumber during the period of dissolution but as they have latent desire for the experience of pleasure, therefore the Lord called *mantreśvara* created the universe after impregnating *māyā* by means of his *śakti*s:

भोगसाधनसंसिद्ध्यै भोगेच्छोरस्य मन्त्रराट् ।
जगदुत्पादयामास मायामाविश्य शक्तिभिः ॥
सा चैका व्यापिनीरूपा निष्कला जगतो निधिः ।
असूत सा कलातत्त्वं यद्योगादभवत्पुमान् ।
जातकर्तृत्वसामर्थ्यो विद्यारागौ ततोऽसृजत् ॥
विद्या विवेचयत्यस्य कर्म तत्कार्यकारणे ।
रागोऽपि रञ्जयत्येनं स्वभोगेष्वशुचिष्वपि ॥
नियतिर्योजयत्येनं स्वके कर्मणि पुद्गलम् ।

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कालोऽपि कलयत्येनं तुर्यादिभिरवस्थितः ॥
तत एव कलातत्वादव्यक्तमसृजत्ततः ।
गुणानष्टगुणां तेभ्यो धियं धीतोऽप्यहङ्कृतम् ॥
तत्त्रिधा तैजसात्तस्मान्मनोऽक्षेशमजायत ।
वैकारिकात्ततोऽक्षाणि तन्मात्राणि तृतीयकात् ॥

MvT I.25–26ab, 27–31

The Lord of *mantras* for the purpose of creation of all means of experience for those who are desirous of having them after taking *māyā* under his possession created the universe by means of his *śaktis*. This *māyā* in the form of *vyāpinī* was single and all-pervading, and was without any part but it is the receptacle of the universe. ... She gave birth to *kalā* and by its association with *Māyā, Puruṣa* emerged who was capable of agenthood. From *kalā, vidyā* and *rāga* were created. *Vidyā* is the discerning power and the power to do one's activity, while *rāga* colours him (*puruṣa*), causes attachment toward its objects, even though they are impure. *Niyati* restricts the soul to act in its particular sphere of object. Time (*kāla*) also puts limitation to him while abiding steadily in *tuṭi* and other time fractions. From the principle *kalā*, he then creates *avyakta* and from it the eight-fold *guṇas* were created, from them (*guṇas*) intellect was born and from it ego was created. This ego is three-fold – *taijasa, vaikārika* and *bhūtādi*. From *taijasa* aspect mind, the lord of sense organs, was born and from *vaikārika* aspect of ego all the instruments of knowledge and action arose. But the subtle elements (*tanmātrāṇi*) are born from the third.

Following strictly the tradition of **Śrīpūrva** and **Mālinīvijaya**, Abhinavagupta states:

श्रीपूर्वशास्त्रे तु मनो राजसात् सात्त्विकात्पुनः ॥
इन्द्रियाणि समस्तानि युक्तं चैतद् विभाति नः ।

TĀl IX.276cd–277ab

But according to Śrīpūrva mind was born of the *rājasa* element of the ego, while all the instruments both knowledge and action arise from *sāttvika* elements of the ego – which seems to us reasonable.

In this context it is interesting to note that the subtle elements are supposed to be dull and insentient then how is it possible for them to create elements (*bhūtas*). In reply it is stated:

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क्षुभिताच्छब्दतन्मात्रात् तदध्यासावकाशदात् ।
आकाशं जातमेकेन गुणेनैवोपलक्षितम् ॥
शब्दस्पर्शगुणाभ्यां तु क्षुभिताभ्यां समीरणः ।
गुणौ द्वावत एवास्य दृश्येते वीरवन्दिते ॥
शब्दस्पर्शालोकगुणैः क्षुभितैरनलोद्भवः ।
त्रिगुणत्वमतस्तस्य प्रशंसन्ति त्रयीविदः ॥
शब्दस्पर्शरूपरसैः क्षुभितैर्वारिसंभवः ।
चतस्रः शक्तयस्तेन वारिणो वरवर्णिनि ॥
शब्दादिभिः पञ्चभिश्च क्षुभितैर्भूसमुद्भवः ।
तेन सर्वगुणा भूमिः सर्वदैव विभाव्यते ॥

under comm. on TĀl IX.288

The void characterized by one attribute was born from the agitated subtle element of sound which is the giver of space because of its capacity of allowing space. Air is born of the agitation of the subtle elements of the sound and touch. For this reason, O lady adored by the brave, two qualities are seen to abide in it. While fire is born due to disturbance in the sound, touch and form *tanmātra*s. Therefore, the knowers of the Vedas praise the fire for the existence of three qualities. Water comes into existence when the sound, touch, form and fluidity of the *tanmātra*s are agitated. Therefore, O delightful lady, the four characteristic marks (*śakti*s) exist in-it. When five *tanmātra*s beginning with the sound element and so on are disturbed simultaneously the emergence of the earth occurs. Therefore, the earth should always be thought of equipped with all *guṇa*s.

From the above citation it is clear that subtle elements and that of great element are not mutually exclusive. The subtle element of the void has the characteristic of enormous unoccupied empty space which is capable of allowing space to anything, similarly the innate quality possessed by it is sound which has the innate nature to denote or signify anything whatever a person likes to convey. Therefore, Abhinavagupta correctly observes:

क्षुभितं शब्दतन्मात्रं चित्राकाराः श्रुतीर्दधत् ॥
नभः शब्दोऽवकाशात्मा वाच्याध्याससहो यतः ।

TĀl IX.283cd–284ab

The subtle elements of sound when agitated bear different forms of *śruti* 'octaves'. Void (*nabha*) and its quality sound are characterized by allowance of space because it has the capacity of signifying objects.

As element the sound has the capacity to allow space for signifying object (*vācya*), similarly void its effect allows space to any object.

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According to Tantra, dissolution is – '*svasminneva kāraṇe pralīnatvaṃ nāma nāśo, yadantarviparivartina evārthasya bahiravabhāso nāma kāryatvam*', i.e. destruction means the state of dissolution in the cause of its own, while receding from there manifestation of the objects externally is the state of the effect (cf. TĀl IX – viveka, p. 186).

Creation is sometimes called *mahāsṛṣṭi* – a great creation, similarly dissolution in its unique form is known as *mahāsaṃhāra*:

तत्सृष्टौ सृष्टिसंहारा निःसंख्या जगतां यतः ।
अन्तर्भूतास्ततः शाक्ती महासृष्टिरुदाहृता ॥

TĀl VI.173

As numberless creations and dissolutions of universe are included in the creation of *śakti*, therefore creation related to *śakti* is known as the great creation (*mahāsṛṣṭi*).

Dissolution of the universe when occurs, all the created objects recede up to *śakti*, the ultimate limit of dissolution '*mahāsaṃhāra*', in the same way when creation proceeds it starts from the same *śakti*. It is then known as *mahāsṛṣṭi*.

The **Śiva-Sūtra** throws some light on the concept of creation and maintenance thus:

स्थितिलयौ ॥

ŚSū III.31

Maintenance (of the manifested state and its) reabsorption (are also an unfoldment of his power). (Tr. J. Singh)

Kṣemarāja while commenting on this *sūtra* states that creation is nothing but the unfoldment of the nature of Śiva, while *sthiti* is, maintenance of the universe to persist shining externally for sometime by means of the power of activity relatively with reference to individual knowing subjects (*kriyāśaktyā bhāsitasya viśvasya tattatpramātrapekṣaṃ kañcitkālaṃ bahirmukhatvāvabhāsanarūpā sthitiḥ*). While *laya*, dissolution is resting in the unlimited consciousness (*cinmayapramātṛviśrānti*).

Creation maintanance and reabsorption are viewed by the *yogin* in a different way. This process helps the seeker to be merged in the supreme delight as recorded in the following description from the commentary of Kṣemarāja:

त्रयाणां भावौन्मुख्य तदभिष्वङ्गतदन्तर्मुखीभावनामयानां सृष्टिस्थितिलयशब्दोक्तानां पदानामवस्थानां, यद् आदि प्रधानं त्रिचमत्कृतित्वेन

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आनन्दघनं तुर्याख्यं पदं मायाशक्त्याच्छादितमपि तत्तद्विषयोपभोगाद्यवसरेषु विद्युद्वदाभासमानं तेन तत्तदवसरेषु क्षणमात्रोदितेनापि, अनुप्राणनम् ... ।

ŚSūVim III.38

Of the three states of manifestation (*sṛṣṭi*) maintenance of manifestation (*sthiti*) and reabsorption (*laya*) characterized by orientation towards objects, (*bhāvaunmukhya*) interest in the objects (*tadabhiṣvaṅga*) and inner assimilation of the objects (*antarmukhībhāvanāmaya*) that which is *ādi*, the main one, viz. *turya* (the transcendental state) is by infusion of its delight in all the three (viz. waking, dream, deep sleep) compact bliss. This transcendental bliss though veiled by *Māyā-śakti* appears (for an instant) like a flash of lightning on the occasion of the enjoyment of various objects of pleasure. Therefore though that bliss appears only for an instant on various occasions, one should enliven oneself with it. (Tr. J. Singh)

To the seeker of the truth *laya* bears a very special meaning – it is neither annihilation nor destruction, it is rather a meditative process of getting everything dissolved in its previous source from which it has emerged and finally to reach the primary source which should steadily be meditated upon.

शरीरे संहारः कलानाम् ॥

ŚSū III.4

Dissolution of the various parts of the *tattvas* in the body (gross, subtle, and causal) should be practised.

The body of ours is gross made of gross elements, but behind it there exists a subtle body consisting of five *tanmātras*, *manas*, *buddhi* and *ahaṃkāra* and the highest body made of vital air (*prāṇa*) and subtle *manas*, the latter reaches up to *samanā*. All the body constituents from the earth onward should be meditated upon as dissolved in its cause and finally the seeker reaches the ultimate and is able to conceive that everything is permeated by the nectarine essence of the Lord and the seeker himself is identical with that pure light.

Creation is viewed by Maheśvarānanda, the exponent of Mahārtha School of Śaivism as:

सृष्टिर्हि नामोद्योगावभासचर्वणात्मविलापन निस्तरङ्गत्वलक्षणप्रथापञ्चक-समष्टिः ... ।

MaMa Parimala 39

Creation means intentness, manifestation, rumination, dissolution in the self and wavelessness. It is an aggregate of five thought process.

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From the above citation it becomes clear when we examine the view by borrowing light from Maheśvarānanda. When a potter, for example, conceives the jar to be shaped lying identical with his self, he by his intentness makes it manifest externally. The process that is involved in the beginning is known as *udyoga*, intentness, while the latter is the process of actual manifestation. The next stage is *carvaṇa*, rumination, chewing, tasting the delight by the process of baking the jar in the sun then placing it in the kiln thinking all the time that it is his own and none but the projection of his self. When *carvaṇa* is over he becomes indifferent about it because the thing which he has just created is no longer his, it is a thing which will fulfil some purpose of others. The process is known as *ātmavilāpana*, dissolving the thing in the self. Finally he becomes or arrives at the state of wavelessness.

The entire process involving five stages is known as creation.

According to Āgama, *saṃhāra* 'dissolution' is described to be of five types. How *saṃhāra* occurs is described by Matańga thus:

क्रीडतोऽस्य जगत्कार्यं श्रीकण्ठस्यामितद्युतेः ।
जगदात्मवशं कर्तुमथ तस्मात्सलीलया ॥
तीव्रेण योगवीर्येण शरीरं पद्मजन्मनः ।
समाविश्य जगत्कर्ता तमसा भूरिणा यदा ॥
ब्रह्मणः सात्त्विकं वृत्तमभिभूतं शिवेच्छया ।
स्थापयित्वा च कालाख्यं विवेश भुवनेश्वरम् ॥

MPā vp XXV.4–6

While performing the function of the universe to continue as if in a sport Śrīkaṇṭha, the highly luminous one, in order to bring the universe under one's control, that is to get it rest in His self by His will the creator of the world entered the body of Brahmā by means of his intense power of *yoga*. When the *sāttvika* nature of Brahmā was overpowered by excessive *tamas*, darkness, by the will of the Lord Śiva and thus placing him in great slumber, He entered *kālānala*, the all-consuming fire, the lord of the universe.

कालाग्निरुद्रो दीप्तात्मा ज्वलच्छक्तिमरीचिभिः ।
ऊर्ध्वगाभिः सुघोराभिर्ददाह भुवनत्रयम् ॥

MPā vp XXV.30

Kālāgnirudra who is exceedingly bright by his frightful burning flames moving upward burnt the three worlds.

During the period of Brahmā's state of sleep everything was consumed by the great fire. There was neither birds and deer, nor animals and men, neither

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gods and demons, nor snake and water, but when the period of sleep of Brahmā was over he was once again appointed to function to act as the agent of creation. In this manner Brahmā exists for one hundred years in accordance with the life span belonging to him. Then the *brahmāṇḍa* itself is dissolved and merges in the water along with the earth, then water in fire and fire in air, air in the void, the void in the ego, ego in *mahān*, *mahān* in *guṇa*s and *guṇa*s in *avyakta*.

Pralaya 'dissolution' is viewed differently. The one is known as *kaniṣṭha* in which Brahmā is dissolved. The next is that which in regressive way goes to rest in *guṇa*. It is known as *madhyama*, intermediate state of dissolution and the last one is known as *mahāpralaya*, the great dissolution. It should be noted in this context that *pralaya* is not a permanent feature. It is rather an end of the movement of a cycle. Therefore souls who become inactive during the dissolution come back once again:

सुषुप्तकरणाः सन्तः प्रतीक्षन्ते निशाक्षयम् ।
प्राप्ते चाह्नर्मुखे पत्युरनन्तेशस्य धीमतः ॥

MPā vp XXV.54

They (the *kṣetrajña*s) being bereft of instruments wait for the end of the night (the night of the great dissolution). Then at the dawn belonging to the wise lord Ananta (a different one from the former was appointed).

Thus the cycle of creation, maintenance and dissolution goes on continuously.

The **Yoginī Hṛdaya** gives an elaborate presentation of how the divine goddess is worshipped in both ways either through meditation or through rituals on *Śrīyantra* (for illustration see Kalātattvakośa Vol. II, p. 70 figure 5). This *yantra* otherwise known as *cakra* consists of nine triangles. The apex of the fire go upward and five (*śakti*s) downward. They are to be meditated upon as *śakti* and fire:

तच्छक्तिपञ्चकं सृष्ट्या लयेनाग्निचतुष्टयम् ।

YoH I.8ab

By means of creation five *śakti*s are engaged, while the four fires are engaged in dissolution.

The text further states how the *cakra* emerges:

यदा सा परमा शक्तिः स्वेच्छया विश्वरूपिणी ॥
स्फुरत्तामात्मनः पश्येत्तदा चक्रस्य सम्भवः ।

YoH I.9cd–10ab

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When the Supreme dynamic energy by the force of Her will though being immanent as the universe beholds Her own vibrative stir, then emergence of *cakra* occurs.

The text defines *sṛṣṭi* 'creation' and *saṃhṛti* 'dissolution', with reference to the *cakra*:

सृष्टिः स्यान्नवयोन्यादिपृथ्व्यन्तं संहृतिः पुनः ॥
पृथ्व्यादिनवयोन्यन्तमिति शास्त्रस्य निर्णयः ।

YoH I.77cd–78ab

Creation indicates all the nine beginning from *vaindava* to the three squares which is earth and dissolution indicates all beginning from the earth and ending in *navayoni*, technically known as *vaindava*.

Amṛtānandanātha, the commentator following the tradition of **Saṅketa Paddhati** emphasises to view the *cakra* thus:

प्रत्येकमंशभेदेन सर्गस्थितिलयक्रमात् ।

Saṅketa Paddhati quoted in YoH (Dīp) p. 81

Each with the distinction of sections is viewed with the aspect of creation, maintenance and dissolution.

Therefore the three squares have the aspect of creation, the section of sixteen lotuses is maintenance-creation, the section of eight lotuses is creation-dissolution. This group of three is predominantly of the nature of creation. Thus the fourteen cornered *cakra* is of the nature of creation of maintenance, the exterior ten cornered one is maintenance, while the inner ten cornered one is dissolution of maintenance. These three are predominantly composed of *sthiti*. Thus the eight cornered one is known as *saṃhāra- sṛṣṭi*, the inner triangle is maintenance of dissolution, and the central *bindu* is *saṃhāra*, dissolution, dissolved.

Manifestation in the Arts

by **Advaitavadini Kaul**

As is clear, *sṛṣṭi* denotes creation and *saṃhāra* denotes dissolving itself back into the primordial unity. This constitutes the cosmic cycle. The Indian Arts emanate from one unifying vision and are governed by some fundamental principles. Artistic expressions are the many forms of this vision and the fundamental concepts. A language of form evolved. In the **Ṛgveda** occurs an important verse:

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रूपंरूपं प्रतिरूपो बभूव तदस्य रूपं प्रतिचक्षणाय ।
इन्द्रो मायाभिः पुरुरूप ईयते युक्ता ह्यस्य हरयः शता दश ॥

ṚV VI.47.18

In every figure he hath been the model: that is his only form for us to look on.
Indra moves multiform by his illusions; for his Bay Steeds are yoked, ten times a hundred. (Tr. R.T.H. Griffith)

The distinction of the works of art is further defined in the **Aitareya Brāhmaṇa** thus:

देवशिल्पान्येतेषां वै शिल्पानामनुकृतीह् शिल्पमधिगम्यते ... ।

AitBr VI.27

Śilpāni, works of art of men, are an imitation of divine forms; by employing their rhythms a metrical reconstitution is effected of the limited human personality. (Tr. A.K. Coomaraswamy)

The **Yoginī Hṛdaya**, sees the world as a painting which is caused to become manifest by the will of the divine.

जगच्चित्रं समालिख्य स्वेच्छातूलिकयात्मनि ।
स्वयमेव समालोक्य प्रीणाति भगवान् शिवः ॥

Dīpikā comm. on YoH I.50

After painting the picture of the universe on the surface of the self by means of the brush representing His will and seeing it Himself Lord Śiva becomes pleased. (Tr. H.N. Chakravarty)

In literature at the outset of each composition one can observe that the poets and dramatists pay their homage to the Supreme Being as the source of creation (*sṛṣṭi*) and the controller of sustenance (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*saṃhāra*).

Kālidāsa, in his unique work, the **Abhijñānaśākuntala** has summerised both the genesis and sustenance of this world.

या सृष्टिः स्रष्टुराद्या वहति विधिहुतं या हविर्या च होत्री
ये द्वे कालं विधत्तः श्रुतिविषयगुणा या स्थिता व्याप्य विश्वम् ।
यामाहुः सर्वबीजप्रकृतिरिति यया प्राणिनः प्राणवन्तः
प्रत्यक्षाभिः प्रपन्नस्तनुभिरवतु वस्ताभिरष्टाभिरीशः ॥

AbhŚāk I.1

May Īśa (The Lord), endowed with the eight visible forms, protect

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you! – (the eight forms, viz.) (1) that which is the first creation of the Creator (i.e. Water), (2) that which conveys (to the gods) the oblation offered according to customary rites (i.e. Fire), (3) that which is the Sacrificer, (4 and 5) those two that regulate time (i.e. the Sun and the Moon), (6) that which has sound for its quality and which pervades the universe (i.e. Ether), (7) that which they call the source of all seeds (i.e. the Earth), and (8) that by which creatures possess breath (i.e. Air). (Tr. M.R. Kale)

In the **Raghuvaṃśa** king Dilipa pays his respects to Lord Śiva as the cause of all these three aspects:

मान्यः स मे स्थावरजंगमानां सर्गस्थितिप्रत्यवहारहेतुः ।
गुरोरपीदं धनमाहिताग्नेर्नश्यत्पुरस्तादनुपेक्षणीयम् ॥

Ragh II.44

True, my respect is due to that god, who is the author (cause) of the creation, preservation, and destruction of all things, animate and inanimate; but (it is also my duty), on the other hand, not to allow this property of my preceptor, who maintains his sacrificial fire, to be destroyed before my eyes. (Tr. G.R. Nandargikar)

Similarly, the **Kumārasambhava** records, that it is only one form that has been manifested in three forms of Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva:

एकैव मूर्तिर्बिभिदे त्रिधा सा सामान्यमेषां प्रथमावरत्वम् ।
विष्णोर्हरस्तस्य हरिः कदाचिद्वेधास्तयोस्तावपि धातुराद्यौ ॥

Kum VII.44

That was but one form which divided itself in three ways. Their seniority or juniority is common (interchangeable); sometimes Śiva is prior to Viṣṇu or Viṣṇu to Śiva; sometimes Brahma to them both; and sometimes the two to Brahma. (Tr. M.R. Kale)

The same idea has been reflected in Bāṇa's **Kādambarī**:

रजोजुषे जन्मनि सत्त्ववृत्तये स्थितौ प्रजानां प्रलये तमःस्पृशे ।
अजाय सर्गस्थितिनाशहेतवे त्रयीमयाय त्रिगुणात्मने नमः ॥

Kād I.1 (cf. Pañcapādikāvivaraṇa 1)

Salutation be unto the unborn (Almighty), of triple form, the cause of creation, continuance and annihilation, and of triple quality, with *rajas* (activity), predominating at creation, *sattva* (goodness) during continuance, and *tamas* (darkness) overpowering at destruction (death) of all creatures. (Tr. J.S.N. Chakravarty)

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Bharata's **Nāṭya-Śāstra**, throws ample light on the origination of the *Nāṭyaveda*, which has been mentioned as the fifth Veda in the **Nāṭya-Śāstra**. Brahmā, with a desire to generate *Nāṭyaveda* comprised all the faculties (viz. *nṛtta, gīta, vādya*, etc.) initiating all the *śilpa*s (*citra, pusta*, etc.) including Itihāsa-Purāṇa, had reflected over four Vedas. Having collected materials from the same He created it.

सर्वशास्त्रार्थसम्पन्नं सर्वशिल्पप्रवर्तकम् ।
नाट्याख्यं पञ्चमं वेदं सेतिहासं करोम्यहम् ॥
एवं सङ्कल्प्य भगवान् सर्ववेदाननुस्मरन् ।
नाट्यवेदं ततश्चक्रे चतुर्वेदाङ्गसम्भवम् ॥

NŚ I.15–16

I am creating the fifth Veda including Itihāsa entitled *nāṭya*, conveying the essence of all the scriptures and initiating all the *śilpa*s. Having contemplated thus, the Lord brooded over all the Vedas and generated *nāṭyaveda*, a compilation of the materials from four Vedas. (Tr. P. Ghosal)

Śārṅgadeva in his **Saṅgīta-Ratnākara** speaks of the purpose of creation and dissolution. In his view this world has been created by the Lord for the enjoyment of *jīva*s, whereas dissolution takes place when He requires relaxation. Therefore creation and dissolution may be considered as an incessant flow.

जीवानामुपभोगाय जगदेतत् सृजत्यजः ॥
स आत्मा परमात्मा च विश्रान्त्यै संहरत्यथ ।
तदेतत् सृष्टिसंहारं प्रवाहानादि संमतम् ॥

SR I.2.9cd–10

The unborn one creates this world for the enjoyment of the individual beings; and that Ātman, the Universal Self, withdraws it for the sake of rest: thus, the order of creation and dissolution is believed to be an incessant flow. (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

According to his opinion the *jīva – jagat*, i.e. the creation and creator are not different but the same. He creates on with the aid of *avidyā*.

ते जीवा नात्मनो भिन्ना भिन्नं वा नात्मनो जगत् ।
शक्त्या सृजन्नभिन्नोऽसौ सुवर्णं कुण्डलादिवत् ॥
सृजत्यविद्ययेत्यन्ये यथा रज्जुर्भुजङ्गमम् ॥

SR I.2.11

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These individual beings are not different from the *ātman*, neither is the world different from it; for, creating by its own power, it is non-different (from its creation), just as gold is non-different from (its products such as) ear-ring etc.; according to others, however, it creates through nescience as the rope (gives rise to) the illusion of snake. (Tr. P.L. Sharma)

In the **Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa**, *pralaya* is treated as complete absorption of meaning.

प्रलयस्तीव्रदुःखादेरिन्द्रियास्तमयो मतः ।

Sark V.146ab

The dissolution of senses due to extreme sorrow etc., is held as *pralaya* – complete absorption. (Tr. K.N. Mishra)

Thus, it may be ascertained that the divine power is concealed in each and every object in this world. It is possible to visualise that divinity only through the continued process of contemplation and synthesis. On the basis of this fundamental concept the various forms of Indian arts are to be understood as the symbolic recreations of the divine at the level of microcosm, the sustenance of the same linked with the macrocosm and finally absorption of micro in the macro through the realisation of the specific levels of existence which in itself is an ongoing process.

Vedic rituals (*yajña*) represent the fusing of multiplicity back into the primordial unity. In the words of Julius Eggeling: "Sacrifice (*yajña*) is a microcosmic representation of the ever-proceeding destruction (*saṃhāra*) and renewal (*sṛṣṭi*) of all cosmic life and matter (*sthiti*)" (ŚBr Part IV, Introduction, p. xv).

In the field of architecture temple is a replication of the cosmos (*sṛṣṭi*). It is symbol of the immanence and transcendence. A devotee, at the physical level moves from outer light into the physical darkness of the *garbhagṛha*, and at the psychical level he moves from the state of ignorance to receive inward light and luminosity. As Dr. Kapila Vatsyayan rightly points out: "The architectural programme is designed to facilitate this psychic journey of opening the doors of perception and form. Thus, the journey is from multiplicity to unity, from grossness to subtlety, from time to timelessness. The temple as a concept, form, function and experience is complete only when an inanimate stone is animated and empowered to transform the human" (*Encyclopedia of Indian Temple Architecture, South India*, Vol.I, Part III).

The Hindu Trinity representing Brahmā, Viṣṇu and Śiva are associated with specific cosmic functions, i.e. creation (*sṛṣṭi*), preservation (*sthiti*), dissolution

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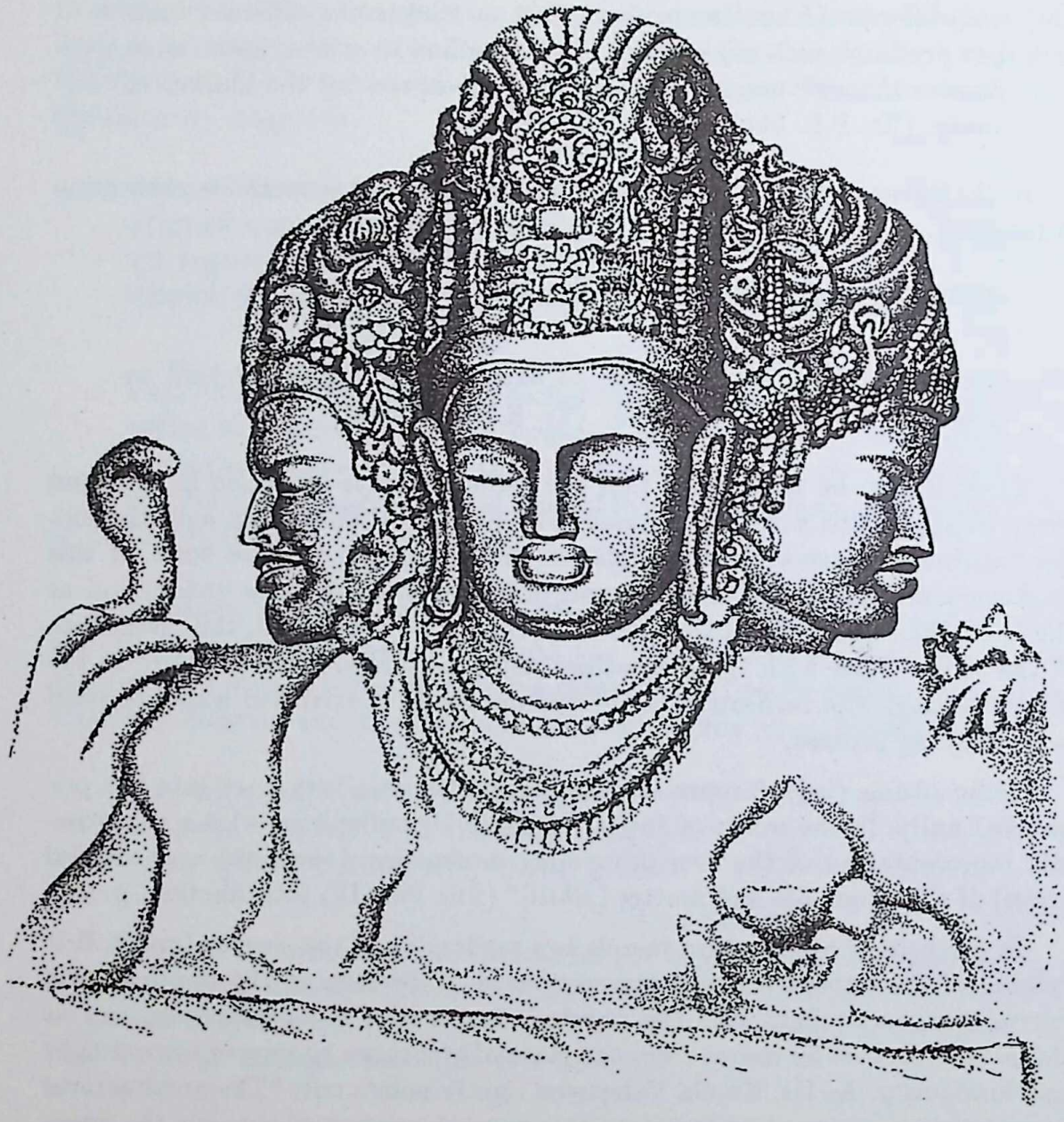

Figure 10: *Trimūrti*, Elephanta, ca 7th–8th Cent. A.D.

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(*saṃhāra*) respectively. Brahmā symbolises the equilibrium between two opposite principles represented by Viṣṇu, i.e. centripetal and Śiva, i.e. centrifugal and thus symbolising the renewal and disintegration of the cosmos. The manifesting aspect of the trinity is known as *śakti* which is represented and personified by the three goddesses, viz. Sarasvatī, Lakṣmī and Durgā. Sarasvatī the goddess of learning is linked to Brahmā the creative aspect while Lakṣmī is the consort of Viṣṇu the preservative aspect and Durgā or Kālī the partner of Śiva represents the destructive aspect of the intelligence presiding over the universe.

The concept can be seen in rituals and performances throughout India. In fact one can observe these not only in Hindu but also in Buddhist and Jaina rituals and performances. As for instance the festival of Navarātra, also known as Durgā Pūjā or Navadurgā is observed, is the re-enactment of the process of creation, sustenance and dissolution. During the Durgā Pūjā the Goddess symbolising universal *śakti* (energy) is propitiated for obtaining perpetual Bliss. Various images of the Goddess Durgā are made for the worship. In the course of performing various rituals the central object of worship remains the *navapatrikā* placed in the pot. It is also seen that the paddy seeds are grown during the continuous worship. The rituals reach to the peak during last three days when submerging of the images etc. takes place on the last day. Since this world is considered a play of three *guṇas* – qualities, i.e. the *sattva, rajas* and *tamas*, the number nine in Navadurgā, Navarātra or *navapatrikā* conveys the symbolic meaning of the concept of three combinations of each *guṇa* making the total of nine combinations. Further the Āgamas also mention nine forms of Durgā. In the concept of Navadurgā as discribed in iconography, Durgā is also equated with the earth, as earth possesses the characteristic qualities of all the five elements, i.e. earth, water, fire, air, and ether.

In Tibetan Buddhist Monasteries there is a custom of drawing sand *maṇḍala*s. (Initially the *maṇḍala*s used to be drawn on the ground with powder (*cūrṇa*) of different colours.) The practice takes place on the occassion of great initiative festival of the Kālacakra. The *maṇḍala* is drawn on the consecrated surface and the initiate performs the prescribed rites around or inside the *maṇḍala*. Once the ceremony is over the *maṇḍala* is obliterated. How similar to the Vedic ritual of performing *yajña* which commences from the selecting of the site for the *śālā*. Then the construction of altar/altars and the establishment of *yūpa* (pole) follows. Finally annihilation takes place by burning of the *śālā*.

Similar to this is Mudiyeṭṭu – an ancient ritualistic performance from Kerala. In this "an enclosure or a *maṇḍapa* is temporarily set up, a centre is established, a line is drawn. The Kurup master, with a lightness of touch (through this one line and the centre), brings to life, with amazing swiftness, a figure of

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Bhadrakālī .... The ritual of drawing the figure (nearly 12sq. ft.) on the ground is conducted to the accompaniment of drumming and singing and is completed to synchronise with the rising crescendo of the drums. Once the image is completed, the Trantri (priest) sits to worship this goddess who is his creation. The idea, given 'form', is brought to life through the *mantras* and the recitations of the Tantri. The lamp, which had been lit in the beginning, is continually filled with oil. It is the symbol of the beginning and of the consecrated circle reconstructing mythical time. The Tantri continues his recitation, the drumming becomes louder and gradually a dance begins, not in and around the figure but over the figure. In wild frenzy, almost as if possessed by the spirit of the goddess, the Tantri now moves first carefully and then madly over the entire figure. In a trance the figure is desecrated. There is no painting left, no image, only the idea and the light of a lamp, against a static icon. The idea comes to life through concrete form and the form returns to the formless...." (Performance: The Process, Manifestation and Experience" in *Concepts of Space Ancient and Modern*, pp. 386–394).

The integration of above concepts can be equally observed in the iconography especially in Śaiva iconography. In confirmation with the legends preserved in the Śaivāgamas as also in the Purāṇas, Śiva has been depicted to have assumed different forms to perform various acts (*līlās*), and all these acts are revolving through the three phases of creation (*sṛṣṭi*), maintenance (*sthiti*) and dissolution (*saṃhāra*) in an unending, uninterrupted and ever renewed dynamic sequence. It is on the same plane that the concept of Naṭarāja – the cosmic dancer (Kalātattvakośa Vol. III, figure 29) sums up in itself the totality of the cosmic process and thus the interpretation: "Creation arises from the drum; protection proceeds from the hand of hope; from fire proceeds destruction; the foot held aloft gives release" (A.K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Śiva*, pp. 59–60).

Process

Creation, sustenance and dissolution are dealt with as they are seen from different perspectives. According to the Naiyāyikas and Vaiśeṣikas creation, sustenance and dissolution occur by the will of Lord. While in the view of Sāṃkhya, this is merely evolution of the primal matter called *Prakṛti* because of the break of balance in *guṇas*. Vedāntins on the otherhand considering it as unreal however assume on the basis of convention (*vyavahāra*) saying that *brahman* in its *saguṇa* aspect creates in order to start creation in association with inscrutable and illusory power called *māyā*. The *māyā* has two aspects, one is *āvaraṇa*, the power of veiling or concealing. This power veils the real nature

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of brahman and other is *vikṣepa*, i.e. the power of projection. It is by these two powers that the illusory picture of creation, sustenance and dissolution goes on persisting. It does not have any beginning, (*anādi*), so to say, but it has its end (*sānta*) only to one who becomes steadily established in the reality of brahman.

The Puranic account of the terms follows strictly the view as held by the Sāṃkhya. The Tantra and Āgama follow the scheme of Sāṃkhya partially but develop it further by emphasizing on the creation not something as unreal but unfoldment of that which remains as the seed.

Conclusion

To sum up: *sṛṣṭi* in the Vedic literature comprises the whole universe including living and non-living objects as well as the world of feelings and emotions. Behind all descriptions of the order of creation lies the belief that the universe is a cosmos. Its organization is governed by a set of laws (*ṛta*). Some think creation is a purely mental process, according to others it presupposes hard toil (*tapas*) and therefore it takes place gradually in the course of time. According to another view creation is the result of the union of male and female principles. At the metaphysical plane creation is regarded as nothing but a manifestation of the potential. Identity between the creator and the creation is stressed in a number of ways, by means of analogies of sparks and fire; waves and sea or by pointing out that the creator enters his own creation. Finally, the creation is regarded as an unreal appearance of the highest reality, the *Brahman*.

The terms *sṛṣṭi, sthiti* and *saṃhāra* basically convey the meaning of unfoldment of that which lies in the inner recess of the mind whether one is a layman like an ordinary potter or the dancer, the musician, the aesthete at the micro level or the Lord the creator at the macro level. The role of each one of them is the same and each one acts as a creator. Each one creates, sustains its creation for a moment and finally becomes indifferent to it – it is the act of dissolution. In Trika doctrine every sentient being is basically non-different from the Lord and therefore is possessed of powers like creation, maintenance, and withdrawal. Even an ordinary potter when makes a pot, it is his creation. He keeps the object for some moment in his mind. It is *sthiti*, and *saṃhāra* is that when he becomes indifferent to it. An aesthete on the otherhand is also a creator. His primary intentness is known as creation, the manifestation of the object before one's view is termed as *sṛṣṭi* and *sthiti*. This *sthiti* continues as a relish (*carvaṇa*) and after a while one feels that the wave of bliss has disappeared, it is then known as *saṃhāra*. In this context there are two views regarding creation – the one is known as *dṛṣṭisṛṣṭivāda*, the doctrine of the objectivity. According

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to this view creation is nothing but projection of that which remains present within. As soon as one sees, one creates the object and as soon as one becomes indifferent to it, it is nothing but *pralaya* 'dissolution'.

Contrary to this view is the view of *sṛṣṭidṛṣṭivāda* – the doctrine of creation followed by objective understanding of the reality. These two doctrines can be termed as idealism and realism.

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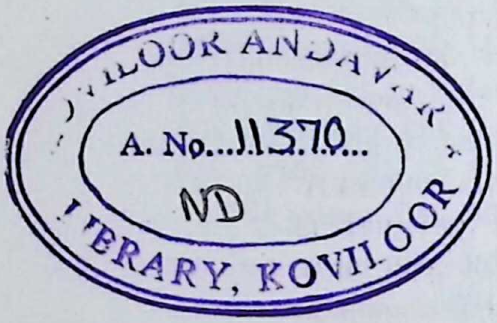

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